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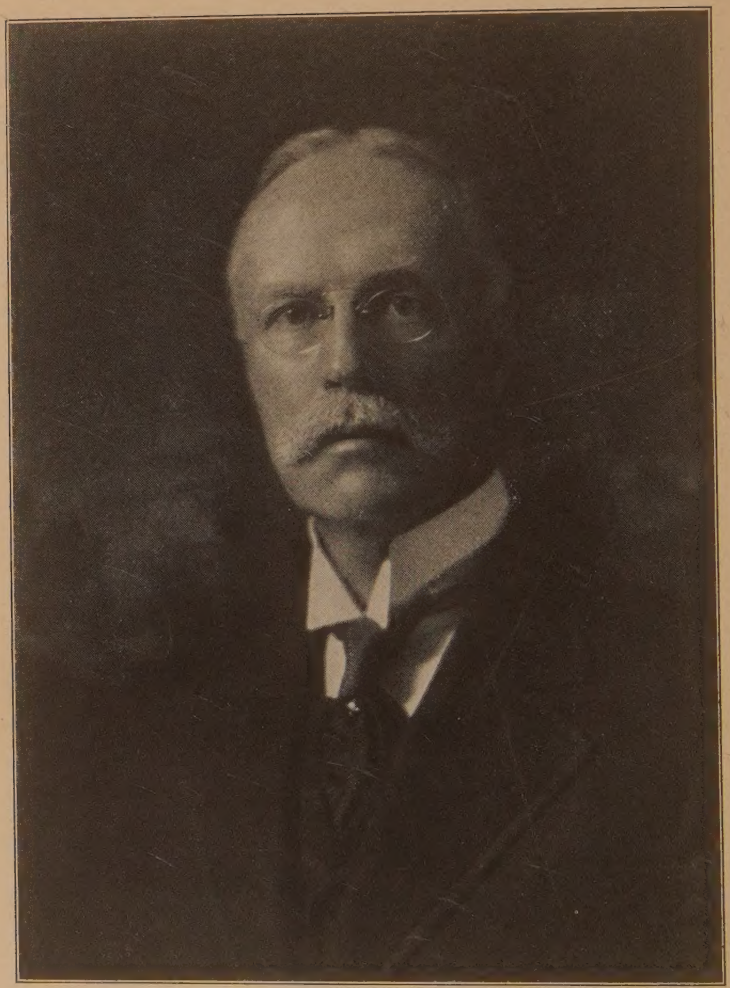

Arthur Warren

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LONDON DAYS

A BOOK OF REMINISCENCES

BY

ARTHUR WARREN

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LONDON DAYS

CHAPTER I

FIRST GLIMPSES OF LONDON

One day at dusk, in the autumn of 1878, when I was eighteen, I arrived at the heart of the world.

I was fresh from New England, and had left Boston, my native city, seventeen days before, embarking at New York on the Anchor liner *Alsatia* three days later; disembarking at Tilbury after a turbulent voyage that lasted two weeks to the hour. What was left of me passed from the Fenchurch Street Station into Leadenhall Street, the least of three passengers in a four-wheeled cab. Through the cab windows, and the ghost of fog which simmered over gas lamps, flashed glimpses of the city, splashes of light on the pavements illuminated windows bound in brass, cumbrous drays and 'busses, and great grey horses, and glistening pubs. The air was heavy with smoke. I heard the tramp of thousands and thousands of persons, all homeward bound, and all wearing top hats. And, of all names, there at the right on a clothier's sign, the enamelled legend: "Dombey and Son!" My head was packed with Dickens, and in a pocket was a linen-backed map.

In one way and another, by books and maps and imagination, I was already on familiar terms with the world-city which I had never seen. I had read it up, studied it, knew intricate maps of it, and stories of its traditions. At a time when the youth of my country and generation were expected to follow Horace Greeley's advice, "Go West and grow up with the country" — or, as interpreted by the cynics, "Go West and start a graveyard" — I made a chance to go East across the Atlantic. And I went. So I beheld the Old World. But I had chances enough, that is, I made them, to see the New World later. And I saw it. History in the making is interesting, — sometimes, and if you survive. History already made and rounded and woven into legend, the scenes among which men have lived and wrought through centuries, shaping the rich past on which we build the present, hold a fascination which did not seem to come to me from regions where man was pioneering. London was the magnet that first drew me. And as the cab turned south from Leadenhall Street and moved slowly along the noisy streams of traffic, I exclaimed presently, to the disappointment of my companions who knew the town and were prepared to point out its places of celebrity:

"London Bridge at last!"

"At last?" said they. "Why, this is quick work for the time of day. How many minutes?"

"But I 've been eighteen years on the way," said I.

I managed to keep awake and hungry till we got to the Wiltshire Road in Brixton, where my guides

from Fenchurch Street were staying. The stagger and strain of the sea voyage had left me stupidly weary, so that as soon as possible after dinner I went to bed. Although I stayed three weeks in that house, all recollection of a dining room has vanished. That may be attributed to the zeal of youth and its indifference to the art of dining, an art acquired speedily enough later on. But never in the subsequent years have I been able to revive a single memory of that Brixton house. And the only recollection of the first three weeks in England is that on the first morning, at an office in the City, I was violently seasick.

Atlantic passengers who begin their voyaging nowadays in luxuriously fitted vessels of fifty thousand tons, and coddled within an inch of their lives, lack the remotest notion of the sea travel of forty years ago. The *Alsatia*, of the Anchor Line, was one of the largest and finest ships afloat in 1878. She had a single smokestack and a single screw, no covered deck for passengers, no barber shop, no electric lights, not even an electric bell. Deck chairs were unknown, but later you could buy them ashore and store them in the Company's baggage room against your return. No meal could be served on deck without the permission of the captain. The first mate was a surly ass who threatened passengers with irons if he caught them infringing some stupid rule, long since abolished; and although the steamer was fairly new she belonged to the age when seamen hated fresh air in a hull, and the smells from her bilges would have asphyxiated an ox. She was one

tenth the size of the big liners of to-day, five thousand tons being registered to her credit in the advertisements where she was described as "a giant." She was a worthy sea craft, but she hopped, skipped, and jumped all the way from New York to London, used fourteen days in getting there, ten being made against head gales and heavy seas, one of which threw a sailor from the maintop to the deck, killing him, and sweeping overboard two hundred sheep which we carried on the foredeck. Nearly all liners in those days carried sail and were square-rigged. Their canvas was stained with soot and smoke, but it had a steadying effect on the ship when spread to a favouring quarter. Whether the *Alsatia* carried sail I never knew for I was ten days helpless and agonised in my cabin, and for three days more the mastheads seemed to scrape the scudding clouds with a fore-and-aft motion that tore your eyes if you looked skyward. It was only after we had passed well up Channel, near Dover, that the wind eased and we could venture on deck without clinging to life lines.

This horror of seasickness was as unexpected as it was distressing, for, if I had not been brought up on the sea, I had been accustomed to it long enough, and had sailed an eighteen-foot catboat up and down Massachusetts Bay, where there is rough water much of the time and scope for seamanlike work all the time. Whether on long rollers, or on choppy water, I had never been troubled by the sea's motion until the *Alsatia* tumbled across the Atlantic, and then it was my head that bore distress, and not my

centreboard. It seemed as if the fragment of brain still remaining in me broke loose and rattled from skull to toes, bounding back with a hideous roar and horrid pressure which found no relief till we got into quiet water. I vowed never to go to sea again. Since then I have made more than fifty voyages on the North Atlantic alone.

There was a man aboard who had a salty sailor's fondness for a howling sea, and we became amazing friendly. And he was amazing fat, so that he took very short steps. As I was no thicker than a lath, and six-feet-an-inch-and-a-half tall, there was contrast enough as he paddled alongside me. Creeping from the hated stateroom where ten nearly foodless and acutely torturing days had been passed in a damp melancholy, I saw a dozen or fifteen passengers — our full strength — seated at a long table on the starboard side of the saloon, listening to Mr. Pickwick reading "Othello." He was as round as Pickwick, not quite so cherubic as Phiz's immortal drawing, and minus the spectacles. In the tossing night, when we had forgotten that any portion of the universe was ever still, he was declaiming Othello's speech to the Senate.

The figure and the fact were incongruous, but the effect of the declamation was not. He read all the tragedy, barring a few cuts. I supposed him a comic actor with an ambition for tragic parts. Some sailors staring through a deck light took him for a "sky pilot" reading the burial service for their fellow, but thought him over-long about it. His name was Henry Murray. He was a Scotsman

retired from the Chinese trade. He was also a Free Mason, Past District Grand Master for China. He was returning to England with the intention of becoming a public reader. He intended even to become an actor of Falstaff and he had long been a capable amateur. His father had been a famous actor in Edinburgh; his brother commanded the Guion liner *Arizona*, and later, the *Alaska*.

Henry Murray was a good judge of acting. But his fondness for acting was fatal to his fortunes and his life. The first he spent in efforts to establish himself; the second he wore out in disappointment over the failure of his plans. I remember him with genuine affection, because he was the first to open to me any door in the mighty and mysterious world of London.

Plans had no place in my baggage, at least no plans requiring space. I had practically worked my way to London where I was to join the staff of an American engineering concern who were introducing an invention. Though lacking years I had sufficient application, and I had learned enough of the business to justify my appointment. That, in fact, had been my purpose, and I worked hard to achieve it and uphold it. But I wanted to write. And, being in London, why not write about London? I knew that Mrs. Glasse's recipe for cooking hare had begun, "First catch your hare", and so the prescription for my own case ran, "First learn your London." Meantime I had my vocation to lean on. During the business hours of four years I ran with my vocation, and, out of business hours, followed my hobby.

Old Mother London gave me the key to her streets, and diligently I used it. Into every old church I wandered, and into every old building that had given shelter to Fame when she touched a poet, a philosopher, a painter, a literary man, a tragedian, a soldier, sailor, or a king. And I knew the burial places of those she cherished, and those she flouted, or those she flirted with, no less than the living places of those who still pursued her on any of the grey mornings in which I rambled. They became as familiar to me as any 'bus line, and I became a walking directory to the odd corners where she had preened her feathers for an hour or for a space of years. I became saturated with her legends, and occasionally an arbiter in cases of suspected masonry whose identity rumour and record had disputed or concealed. That was one form of amusement. The play was another.

I was at home in London from the moment of my arrival at Fenchurch Street. It had been a far cry to Fenchurch Street, and when a lad made it in company with a rotund gentleman of Pickwickian build, the chances were sure to be amusing. After trying two or three boarding houses, I settled in chambers just out of Queen Square in Bloomsbury. Murray was in apartments half a mile away, in Marchmont Street. Marchmont Street was shabby in those days, whatever it may be now. On the west side of it, over a tailor's shop kept by her husband, was the shabby, but clean and shining house of Mrs. Floyth, a melancholy woman who had been maid or housekeeper to John Stuart Mill when

the manuscript of Carlyle's "French Revolution" was burned to light the fires! I have always wondered if the old lady herself were responsible for that conflagration. It might have accounted for her settled melancholy.

My chambers near Queen Square were in a spacious old house which was panelled and carved from roof to entrance hall. There soon began to meet here, once or twice a month, a congenial group, smoking churchwarden pipes. It called itself the "Quill Club", talked politics, the drama, and books, and the members disagreed as heartily as any human beings could on all the topics of life.

There would have been no interest in listening to another fellow's talk had you been in agreement with him. There were but two rules in the Club: the first that a man should say what he thought; the second — give his reasons for thinking so. When a man failed to sustain his opinion by his reasons he paid for the tobacco. The Quills, as may be supposed, were chiefly of a trade, quill drivers. But they were not entirely so: one was "by way of being" an artist, another was a solicitor, a third was inclined to surgery, a fourth made musical boxes, the fifth was a dentist, and the others pursued literature, at greater or smaller distances, and incidentally contributed small feed to the presses in Fleet Street, or elsewhere. Of a dozen, ten are dead. Some made goals, some fell by the way. But they all enjoyed life and work, for all were young. And sometimes they could pay their bills.

CHAPTER II

LONDON IN THE LATE SEVENTIES

London was a more livable place in the late seventies than it is now, or so it seems to me, as it seems to many others who knew the town in that earlier time. There were not so many means for getting everywhere as there are now, and yet we got everywhere, — everywhere, that is, that we wished to go. We were not in a hurry then, and there was more consideration for the old and the lame than there is now. Now there is none at all in the streets or under them. The electric age was prophesied, but nothing more. Nobody in England believed in prophecies. There were arc lights on Holborn Viaduct and the Thames Embankment, nowhere else, but the incandescent lamp had not appeared. There was nothing electrical, in our modern sense, except the telegraph. The telephone was unknown. It is almost unknown to-day, if London's use of it be compared with New York's. There was no electric traction, and the petrol age was nearly a quarter of a century distant. But for all these drawbacks, as I daresay they may be regarded by the youth of the present hour, London was the most livable place in the world, if you loved cities; it had a charm, a fascination all its own.

That charm is not to be described. How can it be described, any more than the charm of a charming woman? You are conscious of it, you know that there is nothing like it, you are sorry for those who must live elsewhere and cannot come under its spell; they have missed that much out of life. You experience a certain largeness of heart, and would like to give everybody a June in London, but reluctantly acknowledge that every one must take the will for the deed.

But if you attempt to analyse London it will baffle your effort. It is at once so splendid and so mean, so spacious and so meagre, so beautiful and so ugly, so noisy and so quiet, so restless and restful, that the farther you go the more puzzled you become, unless having begun by questioning it you end by accepting. Take it in its own way and you will see that it is in itself a problem that cannot be solved by a study of weeks or months; it is a study for a lifetime, for many lifetimes. For instance: architecturally it is too often saddening and mean.

Some one will fly into a rage when he reads the preceding sentence. He will ask resentfully if I think Westminster Abbey, the Parliament Buildings, St. Paul's Cathedral sad, or mean, or shabby. Of course I do not. Their nobility and beauty almost redeem the hundreds of square miles of commonplace and melancholy builders' work that encumbers London. Yet how the mean shops press upon St. Paul's and shut it in! Could anything be uglier than the National Gallery? Could any important thoroughfare be more conducive to depression of

spirits than Victoria Street? It 's not the old London that is architecturally ugly and mean; it is the modern London, and usually the more modern the greater the affliction to the eye. Somebody said, I think it was Schelling, "Architecture is frozen music." Would not anybody say that the Methodist mountain in Westminster is frozen pudding?

London in the late seventies was architecturally less saddening than now, because less that was pretentious and defiant of good taste had been undertaken. Its public buildings of later date are the worst in Europe, excepting those that have arisen in Germany. Squat, heavy, out of proportion, lacking in dignity, in beauty, they seem to have been erected for the purpose of proving that in architecture the modern Briton will neither imitate nor aspire. "The finest site in Europe" is almost the meanest sight. The marvel is that a capital and a country having so many fine models of earlier date do not repeat them, improve upon them, or attempt even a finer taste. The opportunities have been unrivalled, but about the achievements the less said the better. Acres of slums have been swept away to be superseded by miles of masonry which serve mainly to prevent an acquaintance with good taste. What public "improvement" could be shabbier than Shaftsbury Avenue, meaner than newer Whitehall, or more commonplace than Kingsway and Aldwych? What department of a Government could have blocked a vista so remorselessly as the Admiralty has done, or have betrayed a contempt for beauty more disheartening than the County

Council has shown in its latest horror at Westminster Bridge?

The majestic beauties of London seem to have developed by accident rather than by design. The view down Waterloo Place to the Abbey and the Victoria Tower and the view eastward from the Serpentine Bridge in Hyde Park have certainly done so. The view down the river from Waterloo Bridge, or Westminster, was never planned; it grew slowly, being first blessed by every natural advantage that a patient Providence could bestow. In its buildings of a private character, its domestic architecture, London still has much to seek; monotony has been the rule, but the style has not deteriorated. In some respects and localities it has much improved; there is evidence that imagination has been allowed to exercise itself, that all house owners do not, in these times, think alike, and are not content with dwellings which, outwardly at least, seem, class by class, to have been run from one mould. Individuality begins to express itself as if, at last, some Londoners were beginning to lose their fear of becoming conspicuous. An advance in taste has run concurrently with the decline of the top hat and frock coat.

But the interiors of English buildings of all kinds, public as well as private, churches as well as theatres, offices no less than railway stations, clubs, homes, hotels, all are draughty, as lacking in warmth as they were when I first knew them. The exceptions are so few that they are advertised. Central heating is still regarded as a fad, constant hot water is a

novelty; there is a superstitious regard for cold air as pure air, and a fear of warm air as impure. But the worst cold is that of dampness, and many houses are never dry. Mildew is common in their closets, chill in the bedrooms, and their halls are rheumatic. Rheumatism, and its allies lumbago, influenza, pneumonia, and consumption are the customary ills. When the Briton is cold indoors he goes out for a walk and warms his blood. The theory is that artificial warmth is unhealthful; the truth is that it is an expense to which the Briton objects, and that he has not learned how to warm his house. The tough survive. The delicate, the aged, the invalid, or the sedentary take their chances, and while they live do so with an unbelievable lack of comfort. Consequently the English complain of cold when the American would think the temperature moderate; but the American uses heat to keep his house dry as well as warm. He often overdoes it; he often goes as far in one direction as the Briton in the other. But an English house warmed in the American way, not necessarily to the usual American degree, is always appreciated by the Briton, although he may be far from understanding the reason of his content.

London had a charm in the late seventies that it lost when the Twentieth Century was still young, — the charm of leisure. The internal-combustion engine drove leisure from the land. The old two-horse 'bus was a leisurely thing. Even the four-horse express 'busses that plied between the Swan at Clapham to Gracechurch Street, and similar urban and suburban centres, were leisurely enough, com-

pared with the electric trains and motor 'busses that now rush the city man to and fro. They were not comfortable, those horse-drawn caravans with their knifeboard roofs and perilous scaling ladders, that is, they were not comfortable excepting on the box seats to which every man's ambition soared. There, sheltered by great leathery aprons, the lucky passenger braved the weather, beheld the passing world, and exchanged small talk with the driver who condescended affably to discourse, with his "regulars", the news of the day. The smart hansom disappeared long ago. Smart as it was it was leisurely compared with the flashing taxi and motor which have superseded "London's gondola", as Disraeli called it. And, Heaven knows, the sulphurous underground was leisurely beyond words.

Everybody rushes now. London has no more time to spare than New York has. It seems a dream that, when I first entered an English train, the custom was for the railway guards to call, "Take your time, take your time!" But that was their call forty years ago.

Gradually the street cries have lessened in variety, in character, and in interest. The simple trades that announced their wares by a snatch of something that passed for song have disappeared one by one. Even the muffin man is vocal no longer, and his bell is silent. Whatever may have caused the other merchants of the curb to vanish, the war and short rations removed the muffin man. He was almost the last, perhaps actually the last of the creatures who gave to London streets an old-world sound or savour.

When the late seventies were still on the calendar, and for long after, the silk hat was an unrelenting tyrant, and in the City, among stockbrokers, it bore a special gloss. Every male above the age and status of an office boy or a labouring man wore a silk hat. Without that ugly and inconvenient headgear you would not call upon your solicitor, or appear at your banker's, or negotiate a contract, much less intrude upon an official person. The silk hat was a sign of respectability. In the House of Commons it seemed a symbol of the majesty of the British Constitution. There, to this day, the head must be covered, as if the members were in a synagogue. In summer time straw hats were unknown, excepting for the sex that was gentler then, and invariably the sex wore furs with its straws. A man who ventured in a straw hat incurred the risk of obloquy. At any rate, he was as marked and ridiculous an object as Jonas Hanway when, in an earlier century, he raised an umbrella in Oxford Street.

Temple Bar was standing where Fleet Street joins the Strand; the new Law Courts which now overlook its site were in process of construction; the Griffin was undreamed of. Northumberland Avenue had been opened but was incomplete. The modern hotels had yet to be promoted. The Grand was the first of these, but its fortunes were thought hazardous. There was no Metropole, or Victoria, although their walls were going up. Rimmel's perfumery warehouse stood where the Savoy is now, and that sordid adventurer Hobbs (or was it Jabez Balfour?) had not preëmpted the site of the Cecil which was

then covered with lodging houses, chambers, and private hotels. There was no Carlton, no Ritz, no Waldorf; even the Great Central was not in being, and the only restaurants of consequence were the Criterion, St. James', Gatti's old Adelaide Gallery, half its present size, the Café Royal, Very's, and the stuffy predecessor of the present Holborn.

The first run of "Pinafore" had not ended, the revival of Old Drury's prosperous days had not begun; "Our Boys" had been running for nearly five thousand nights at the Vaudeville; Sothern was making his last appearances in the last season of the unremodelled Haymarket; there was the Alhambra but no Empire, no Hippodrome, no Coliseum; St. James' Hall, but no Queen's Hall; the Albert Hall was mostly empty, the old-style music halls were mostly full; Mr. Pinero was acting small parts in Irving's company and had not written so much as the scenario of a one-act play; Henry Arthur Jones had not been heard of; Bernard Shaw was unknown, Adelaide Neilson was at the height of her brief career, Forbes Robertson had begun his, and Bucksstone's days were ending. The era of the Kendals and John Hare at the St. James' was yet to come, but the happy reign of the Bancrofts, at the old Prince of Wales', behind the Tottenham Court Road, where the Scala now stands, had yet to close.

George Meredith was not only "caviare to the general" but "the general" were a little shocked when they learned that he was still a reader for a publishing house and a writer when he had the time. "The general" found delight in the fiction of Miss

Braddon and Mrs. Henry Wood, and, of course, Ouida, as they would delight now if these ladies were spinning copy; Kipling was at school, and Barrie dreaming in the north. We had William Black and Walter Besant and James Rice, but no Society of Authors, and no literary knights. If the world is small now it was very large then, but "sausage and mashed" were cheap at the top of London Bridge, threepence for a pair of hulking sausages and a liberal plate of mashed potato, a penny more for a great hunk of bread, and tu'ppence more for half a tankard of beer.

A certain splendid swagger departed from London Streets when the regiments quartered in town abandoned their gorgeous uniforms and dressed less like magnificos and more like fighting men. They were fighting men though, they and their successors who held back the outnumbering German rush from the Channel ports of France in 1914, as all the world knows, and none know better than the Huns. But they were dandies too, those earlier men, and they filled the eye. Their saucy scarlet, short-waisted jackets, their jaunty fatigue caps, their tight trousers with broad red stripes, on shapely legs which seemed tremendous in length, were at once the admiration of nursemaids and the envy of small boys, lending, as they did, colour and form to these dun streets. Will the glorious colossi who strode thus habited be seen again this side of Charon's ferry; or will their successors lead the simple life in khaki and puttees?

CHAPTER III

A NORMAN INTERLUDE

After a winter in London I went to Paris for a part of the spring, stopping on the way a day in Rochester (I had the Dickens fever then), and another day in Canterbury for the Cathedral's sake. A night boat, the ancient *Wave*, or the antediluvian *Foam*, took me to Calais, and through some delay on the line there was a wait of hours. But the night was fine, and I spent it roaming through and beyond the old town, getting forty winks afterward in the station, and a breakfast of hot chocolate and bread at a place facing the harbour where I watched the fishing boats put out on a convenient tide. In Paris I knew only one person, an American friend who was studying art, taking his lessons at Julian's, and slowly, yet certainly, learning that art was not for him. He introduced me to a lot of men who knew their way about, and soon I knew my way about as well as they did, possibly, in some directions, a little better, for, with one or two exceptions, I cannot remember any who were gifted with a faculty for anything but good-fellowship and for spending their allowances from home. They knew the jargon of the studios, but as Paris seemed full

of men who could paint as well as they and were threatening to do it, the charming group dissolved in a year or two, one after another, returning to their homes in various parts of the world. Not one that I know of is living now, and nearly all whom I could trace in later years had gone into trade, and flourished there.

But my acquaintance with Paris had begun. It was to be extended in subsequent years. What chiefly remains in my recollection concerning those early days is that for the first time I had the consciousness of being in a foreign country. I never had that in England, no, not for a minute, and no one, then or since, ever tried to make me feel it there. Of course, part of the difference was due to language, but not all the difference. There were subtle differences in France, and some plain, outstanding ones. The English are kindly people, hospitable, and, if I must say so — and I think I must, having lived through three years of the great war with them, to say nothing of many preceding years — they are naïve. The Englishman, if he liked you, took you to his home, but he said that the Frenchman did not. But he did, I found. And I found that the Frenchman, if less kindly, was more polite. The Frenchman had either clearer ideas or none at all about other nationalities; the Englishman — but really, these reflections do not belong in this book, but in another, if anywhere. I will not prolong them here, but say only that I was in Paris fairly often after that first visit and that I liked it the more the more I knew it.

But I am forgetting my friend Monsieur Raoul de St. Ange. I would not willingly forget my friend St. Ange. In fact, I could not forget him. He was a delightful man of fifty or thereabouts, a dear and gracious person. I had met him in London where he was giving lessons in French, and trying to make a French weekly paper pay its way and earn him something over. He was of Norman birth, and had lived fairly well in Paris up to the time of the Commune, when he had been ruined. He emigrated to London. He had a wife and two small sons. The boys were about ten and twelve respectively. This little family lived in a little house at Shepherd's Bush. The house was very simple, but it was as neat as wax. I used to help St. Ange a little with the English section of his paper, and in return he gave me lessons in French.

One day he said to me: "I must go to Normandy; a week there. It will give me the greatest pleasure if you come." And so I arranged to meet him at Amiens on my return from Paris. He had some family affairs to settle, something to do with the children, and a bit of property that had been left in trust for them. In Normandy we would see some of his people, a bit of France from the inside not the outside. I jumped at the chance. We met at Amiens, and explored the Cathedral before doing anything else. He knew somebody there, or somebody knew of him, and we were taken all over the wonderful Cathedral, from roof to crypt. We were so long at this that we concluded to spend the night in Amiens, and push on, next morning, by train to

a village some thirty miles or more away, which was one of the objectives of his visit.

The name of that village I have clean forgotten. It has passed like many other names that were supposed to be fixed there. But forgotten it is, although the place itself is associated with memories of rustic hospitality more generous than anything that has ever come my way. Well, we arrived at the village of the forgotten name, and we put up at the house of the station master, in the station building itself. There was no inn. The station master was somehow, somewhere, within St. Ange's circle of friends. He took charge of our kits and showed me to what I am sure was the best bedroom. I had a guilty feeling that the occupants must have turned out for my benefit; but one can only defer to the custom of the country.

Presently Monsieur Station Master, and Madame Station Master, and little Station Master *fils* appeared, each in best bib and tucker, and led the way across the fields, to a little thatched farmhouse two miles distant. The railway contingent evidently were making holiday. All the way we walked through fields of grain, in a wide path which came, by and by, to a little bridge over a chattering stream, and then to a road, and around a bend in the road to the farmhouse, thatched, moss and flowers growing in the thatch, and a family growing in the door, for the doorway was filled with humans of ages from eight to eighty, in rows and tiers. As we drew near there was such a display of waving handkerchiefs and joyous shouts as would have

gratified William the Conqueror himself had he been passing.

St. Ange was smothered in embraces, and I was bidden in, not to the embraces, but to a seat in the fireside, after salutations all round. St. Ange had not been in these parts for twenty years. He was trustee for some of these younkers, and had now come to be relieved of his trust, as the younkers were of age in the eyes of the law. You would have thought that I was a benefactor, so generous were their attentions. Food and wine were pressed upon me. What the good folk were saying did not enter my comprehension; the twists of the Norman tongue were beyond me. But smiles are translatable in any language and so are hearty courtesies. Presently what appeared to be the whole population of the neighbouring countryside streamed in, and St. Ange and his American friend had to meet them all. We met like old friends. Then St. Ange took me to call upon some old folk in a cottage not far away. We must have been a couple of hours calling about. When we returned to the first place a dinner was ready for us, and we for it.

The fat of the land was before us. There was every kind of good thing that grew in Normandy. And there was wine of the country, and plenty of it. The triumph of the occasion was duck, — duck such as I never ate before, and have not eaten since, not even in Paris, where they have a subtle skill in cooking these things. I could write rhapsodies about that duck. When, even nowadays, I am seeking to whet appetite, I think of the ducks I ate in Norman

cottages. No one has eaten duck who has not eaten it in Normandy where every housewife seemed to me a marvel of a cook. I was in Normandy a week, lunched and dined and supped in a different house each day — they were chiefly the homes of cottage folk — and, for abundance and good feeding, I still regard it as a land of miracle.

How I praised the duck at that first dinner, and extolled Madame's skill in cookery! Madame was pleased. Have I conveyed the impression that these were wealthy folk? It was not my intention to do so. They were Normandy peasants, which may mean anything or little as far as well-being goes. The room in which we ate was the living room, cooking-washing-eating-room. I daresay that behind a panel, or a curtain, there was an alcove with a bed. Anyhow, there was one in an adjoining room. And over the dining table was a loft to which you mounted by a ladder which was slung against the ceiling, when not wanted, by rope and pulley. The dining-room floor was of earth, hard packed, hard as nails, clean as the proverbial whistle. Everything shone with cleanliness — windows, napery, brass, pewter, plates, kettles — if all the belongings of the room had whistled there would have been a bellow as if the siren of a big liner had blown. Such cleanliness and such cooking I have not found in all the years that followed in the many English cottages I have known, but I met the combination three or four times a day for six or seven days, each time beneath a different roof.

St. Ange and I walked back across the fields by

moonlight, Monsieur, Madame, and Toddlekins Station Master, and two from our feasting house, accompanying us. That night I slept like a top. At noon what was my surprise and joy to find another duck, duly prepared and cooked by our hostess of the preceding day, waiting for me on the station master's table. It had been brought by one of her small fry with the lady's compliments. There was a compliment fit for a prince! Have I mentioned the wine that graced the basket, and the miraculous green peas that were to melt in the mouth? Ah, well, it was long ago, and it was hospitality.

In that way did Normandy receive us at every halt, whether we called at farm, or cottage, or château. Was there ever such a country for eating and drinking, I wondered. At last we arrived at Rouen. We had driven in from the country, and somewhat wearied and dusty with the journey, we were hurried by a stout and jolly man, a gigantic person who was in waiting on the road, to a delightful dwelling in the town where three generations of St. Ange's relatives welcomed us and would have haled us forthwith to the seats of honour, but that we pleaded for a wash and a change..

It was twelve o'clock when we gathered at table. It was four when we rose. And when we rose, something else was served in the next room. And I was told that we must dine at another house, at seven; I think seven was the hour. And we were to sup at a third party at eleven! But I had become accustomed to this splendour of generosity. St. Ange had warned me at Amiens that it was inevitable,

and could n't be shirked. And so, after the first heroic occasion, the memorable affair of duck at the cottage, I made a great show of eating and drinking, so that these valiant Norman trenchermen would not think me rude and neglectful, and speedily I learned how to keep up the appearance of feasting and of still having a wee-bit appetite at the end. That was doing pretty well, I think, for a novice. And it required some skill in calculation, for at each table there was everything, and abundance of everything, that gourmets or gourmands could desire to eat and drink. In seven days there were twenty-one such feasts!

When we reached London, on our homeward journey, I called for sausage and mashed, and a tankard of bitter, by way of return to the simple life.

But the kindness of it all, the generous hospitality; the opening of hearts to a stranger who comes with an old friend or relative, — in forty years I have seen nothing to equal it. The gentleman who killed the fatted calf offered but a Barmecide feast in comparison with the provender of my Norman friends.

A few days after the return from France a telegram came to me from St. Ange, saying that his boy was seriously ill, and asking me to come at once. In the evening I went as quickly as I could to Shepherd's Bush. The little chap had taken a chill, pneumonia had supervened. The doctor was in the house when I arrived. "Can't live through the night," he said. The parents were with the little fellow. I dozed below in an armchair, knowing that there was need

of sleep if I were to see these good people through the crest of their trouble. An hour after midnight the mother came and said: "It is finished! Yes, dead. I am anxious for *mon mari*. He will not move, or speak. He sits staring — *comme ça*. Please go to him."

I aroused St. Ange and made him come with me. All night till dawn I walked him, through Shepherd's Bush, through Hammersmith, across the Bridge, across Barnes Common, through Mortlake and Richmond, and back again, making him talk and tiring him out. That was the object, to counter his nervous excitement by physical fatigue and to divert his mind. I brought him home at sunrise, limp, exhausted. He slept for ten hours.

I had to make him see that the world had not come to a standstill, that there was no "copy" for his paper, and so on. I saw his printers, his publishers, and some other people he knew who turned out "copy." Between them all they saw him through the worst of his problems. This brought me in a practical way into connection with the outer fringes of Fleet Street and London journalism, and in my odd hours I learned how "copy" was prepared for the compositors, how proofs were corrected, how "forms" were made up, and before long was able to assist some of my new acquaintances when they were pressed for time at these games.

It was natural enough that in following these lines as a joyous amateur I should drift into journalism. I never intended to stay in it, I preferred to write books; but in those days that seemed a mad

thing to do, — to write books and expect to earn money by them. In journalism, if one got his "stuff" printed, he got paid, and, if one knew the ropes, he had n't to wait forever for the payment. There was a certain attractiveness about being paid for work one liked to do, and I liked writing better than anything else. And I liked the rush and pressure of journalism as I saw these things manifested in the experience of my friends. They had adventures too; I also would have them. It seemed possible to know everybody, go everywhere, see everything, and, if one worked the ropes with skill, he might remain his own master. One saw it all through rose-coloured glasses. How else should youth see anything?

Even to-day I see St. Ange through the rose-coloured glasses of memory. It is the only way possible, for except in memory I have not seen him in all these years since we returned from Normandy and his boy died. Within a month from the funeral Raoul St. Ange and his wife vanished. They had returned to France, 't was said, but no one knew. His pupils did not know, his printers did not know, his paper was dying. I suppose he had n't the heart to face the obsequies. He merely vanished. No inquiry revealed him. Never a letter, never a wire, never a trace of any kind in forty years.

CHAPTER IV

I TAKE THE PLUNGE

I HAVE never been so old as I was during my first three or four years in London. It is, or at any rate it used to be, a common delusion of youth that the mantle of years has descended upon its shoulders. In my case the shoulders could have carried a large mantle. I was tall and big framed, earning my living in a foreign country, where, by the way, I felt completely at home; my habits of thought were far beyond those which custom fixes for the 'teens, and all my associates were older than myself, most of them much older. In the work which circumstances and I laid out, youth was by others supposed to be a disadvantage, so that it might have been natural had I assumed the merit of a maturity which I did not possess. But I was not compelled to assume it. It was attributed to me. Nobody supposed that I was under nineteen. I was supposed to be at least half a dozen years older.

My first editor was George Parsons Lathrop, of the *Boston Courier*. He was a son-in-law of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and he achieved the honour of editing my copy by the alacrity with which he published it for nothing. As the suggestion was

my own the acceptance of non-compensated work was entirely fair. If his paper could stand it, I could. I wanted practise, and Lathrop wanted copy. He was perfectly willing that I should practise in his columns. I did n't know him from Adam, but had written to him enclosing a "London Letter" which solicited his acceptance on gratuitous terms. Beneath my generosity was a design. Not only did I need practice but I wanted to be known as the London Correspondent of an American paper, in order to have the *entrée* at theatres, concerts, political gatherings, and other public functions. After sufficient practice with Lathrop, I would endeavour to sell copy in other quarters. The plan succeeded.

When the period of gratuitous service had stretched far enough, a Boston journal of much interest and overwhelming respectability, deigned graciously to pay five dollars a letter for my London "stuff." The magnitude of this offer did not shock me, but five dollars meant a sovereign, and the addition of twenty shillings to one's weekly income suggested wealth to a young scribbler in London. Three or four letters had been despatched when, one evening, an expensive acquaintance who had rooms above mine, near Queen Square, dropped in at my snug chambers and spun a yarn. He had "seen Leighton, you know, President of the Royal Academy, good sort, dev'lish good fellow. What do you suppose he 's done now? Taken up a sculptor in Paris, French of course, poor as I am, poorer, if it 's possible to be poorer than I am, and has had a piece of the chap's work sent over here for exhibit at the Acad-

emy. Sculptor could n't send it. No money. Not even a studio. Devilled for years in other men's studios. Leighton saw, says fellow must become known in London. Got artist chaps to pay expenses of sending over. Good fellow, Leighton. Go see it, you! Press Day — Royal Academy — next week. Forgot French chap's name!"

This brought to my recollection the fact that in Paris, the previous Easter, when haunting Bohemia with a pack of student friends, I had heard of a needy sculptor who was doing things of strange power, and was hard up because he would not work in accepted forms, but persisted in carving things that nobody wanted. And who, in those days, would buy sculpture from an "artist unknown"? My friends promised that I should meet the man, but I was called away from Paris before this could be arranged.

I went to the Royal Academy on Press Day, and saw the specimen of the "new man's" work. I was quite alone with it. One is always sure to be alone in the Statuary Room of the Royal Academy. An article came out of the silence. It went to my five-dollar editor. He responded with this note:

"Sorry we can't pay for any more of your letters. We printed the last one, but, really, we don't want articles about unknown sculptors, especially French ones."

The unknown sculptor, whose name, of course, I gave, was Auguste Rodin!

I subsequently heard that the article was the

first about Rodin to be published in America, and that an artist and fellow townsman of mine, Henry Bacon, then in Paris, brought it to his attention. Months afterward, having followed me half around the world, there arrived by post a big and battered parcel. It contained a photograph of the sculpture I had seen, the bust of Rodin's "St. John Preaching", and the large mount bore Auguste Rodin's autograph with a grateful message to me. I had the trophy framed and hung over the fireplace in my chambers, and there, whether the fireplace were in England or America, it has hung ever since. If I were the first to give Auguste Rodin public recognition in my country, he was the first anywhere to acknowledge my stumbling work.

Vocation was pressing its claims more heavily than usual about that time and there was little opportunity to pursue a project I had formed for writing a series of articles upon "The London of Disraeli." Everybody in pendom had written of "Dickens' London", and "Thackeray's London", and after "Endymion" had made its loudly trumpeted appearance, it occurred to me that Disraeli had a London which the makers of articles had not seized upon and which would yield "material" for interesting copy. This, if well illustrated, might appeal to some magazine editor in America and subsequently become a book. At the same time I was gathering notes and impressions for a series of papers which might be called "Odd Corners of London." For things of this kind America seemed to promise an especially good market, and I believed

that I could supply it fairly well. One thing after another delayed this little plan. Vocation was taking up more time and at higher pressure than is compatible with hobby-riding. It has a habit of doing so. Then a visit to America intervened, for the purpose of spending my twenty-first birthday, and the following five or six months, at home. The return to England was followed by a rush of work in the City, and this by an illness of some weeks' duration. All the while the Disraeli subject lay untouched until, one day in 1882, I met a character in a Disraeli novel, who was much more of a character outside it.

It was a day of powerful rain. The Pullman Company were to run their first train in England over the Brighton line from Victoria Station. They had invited a regiment of celebrities and a few odd sticks. Among the latter I was included by some official of my acquaintance who thought I might write an article for some overseas paper. Taking a place in a smoking car I was solitary for but a minute, when George Augustus Sala entered hurriedly and plumped himself down beside me, saying: "What a beastly, blowy, wet morning!"

"The worst since Noah's time," said I.

"If this train gets to Brighton and returns through the flood, it will be another case not only of pull man, but also of pull devil, pull baker," said Sala.

"There 's copy for you," said I.

"Oh, are you a journalist?" asked Sala.

"I 'm hoping to be. It 's an aspiration."

"Desperation, more likely," he said. "Don't do

it, young man, not if there 's a good crossing to sweep in your neighbourhood. Journalism is the worst trade in the world."

"Every man says that of his own profession," I replied.

"Profession be hanged! What do we profess? We stain paper, and look as wise as owls, and know a damned sight more than we ever tell. Most of us bleat in our folds like sheep; few of us have the chance to go about the world and see things, and even they work like slaves to entertain the public while their owners take the profits. The worst trade in the world, sir; work harder, know more than any other — about human nature, anyhow — and get less for it than any other; what we write is forgotten the day after it 's printed, and when we can't grind out any more, when they 've squeezed our brains dry, we 're thrown on the dust-heap to be buried by a benevolent association. Don't go into journalism unless you own the paper! That 's where the profits are — big circulation and advertising revenue, politics and peerages! I 'm too old for aiming at ownership now; besides, I 'm a writer, not a screw! Journalism be hanged. If I 'd been a *chef* in a millionaire's palace, or a fashionable hotel, I 'd have done better."

Possibly. At any rate he would have been the prince of *chefs* as he was "the prince of journalists", or was it the king the public called him? He was supposed to earn fabulous sums with his pen. If he earned them he spent them, for he left nothing when he had "gone west." He was an artist in

cookery, had a knowing taste in wines; he had been everywhere, seen everything, knew everybody, and on the shortest possible notice could write an article upon anything or nothing. He had a flaming face, small, glittering eyes, a build and frontage not unlike that of Pierpont Morgan of later fame, and a reputation for wit and story-telling. He had also a reputation for geniality. He was as genial as a thunderstorm. His rumblings and clatters might pass quite harmless, or sear you with a flash. His familiar signature was "G. A. S."

"I see you don't believe it," said he, "but you will. Don't say I did n't warn you."

"Thanks," said I.

"Not in the least," said he. "Go to your doom! What 's your paper?"

I said I had written for two or three papers at home, in America, and I told him the story of the editor who did n't want Rodin. He laughed until his white waistcoat nearly burst its buttons. "I had an editor once," said he, "who did n't know the date of the Battle of Waterloo but was certain that Nelson had saved the day. Journalism a 'profession', eh? And editors are the High Board of Examiners. But don't mind me. I 'm like this on wet mornings."

Just then a wet prelate in a shaggy coat shook himself at the door, as if he were a huge dog that had soaked in the rain. His prelacy was revealed by the purple at his throat.

"Monsignor Capel," exclaimed Sala. "How are you? And did you come in a boat?"

"The voyage from Kensington was rough," said the prelate, "but this seems a snug harbour."

"Make fast to moorings here, and to-morrow the envious will say that G. A. S. is travelling Romewards with you on an American train."

"Undreamed-of felicity," said the prelate. "But I think we shall not go far toward Rome to-day. This train has no 'through connection', as they say in America. This is my first experience in an American train, but not, of course, your first, Mr. Sala. Possibly your first, sir," he said, turning to me, as he took a seat beside Sala.

"Oh, no, I 'm an American," said I.

"Then I am doubly fortunate," said the Monsignor. "Because I am going to America and you can tell me how to get about, if you will be so good." This was a pleasant way to break the ice, and as the train filled, presently we had a pleasant company and were speedily at Brighton, where the Pullman people entertained their trainload at luncheon. On the return journey Monsignor Capel sat opposite me at a table built for two, and talked about America. That is to say, he asked questions and I answered them, as we smoked the Pullman cigars. As we parted at Victoria, he invited me to dine at his house, making an appointment for the following week.

He was not only a clever man and "striking", as they say, in appearance, but he had great charm, and being a Jesuit of brilliant and varied accomplishments, could adapt himself easily to any company. As a preacher he was eloquent; as a man of the world he was brilliant and fascinating; as an

ecclesiastic distinguished and influential; as a maker of titled, wealthy, and in the worldly sense "important" converts to Rome he was famous, but as the administrator of a college or university he proved a failure. He was a prominent figure in London life; he was the Monsignor Catesby of "Lothair", as Manning was the Cardinal Grandison. If his fortunes had begun to ebb at the time I knew him, the glamour of his successes was still about him.

Disraeli had described Catesby as "a fascinating man who talked upon all subjects except high mass, and knew everything that took place at Court without being present there himself. He led the conversation to the majestic theme, and while he seemed to be busied in breaking an egg with delicate precision, and hardly listening to the frank expression of opinions which he carelessly encouraged, obtained a not insufficient share of Lothair's views and impressions of human beings and affairs in general."

I dined with Monsignor Capel on several occasions at Scarsdale Lodge, in Wright's Lane, Kensington. Scarsdale Lodge has for many years known a succession of celebrated tenants, of whom Dundreary Sothern was one. Sothern had also lived at Cedar Villa, next door, and Capel had succeeded him there. Now, and for many years, Scarsdale Lodge has been the town home of H. Hughes-Stanton, R.A., whom I have known from almost the beginning of things. Up to the year preceding the Pullman excursion Monsignor Capel had lived in Cedar Villa. Sothern had made that place famous for breakfasts and suppers and practical jokes.

Capel's breakfasts had been quite as famous without the practical jokes. Capel had transformed Sothern's billiard room into a chapel. The dining room in which the actor had "exposed" the "feats" of the Davenport brothers, and where the lights of Bohemia had twinkled, had, under the prelate's tenancy, been noted for its hospitality to pilgrims from the polite world who were on the way to Rome. But the line was not drawn at hungry hearts. Palates that were used to dainty feasts were tickled there, and brilliant table talk of politics and art, of literature and science and society had rippled there. Capel's hospitality was wide; his guests were, as likely as not, non-conformists — if they dared to come — Anglicans who dared anything — and political men of all shades of opinion, especially anti-Gladstonian opinion. But disciples of the G. O. M. were welcome if they were good talkers. They might be converted to other politics; at any rate they would hear them.

Monsignor Capel at home was in purple-edged cassock, with purple buttons and broad purple sash. If in his shaggy overcoat he had suggested bulk, in his cassock and biretta he was a dignified, even an imposing figure. He received me in his study at the twilight hour. The fire-glow played over the room, while the papal chamberlain submitted to the processes of an interview. But "submitted" is scarcely the right word; it is merely the word that custom applies to the extraction of copy from a willing subject. He had invited the interviewer and did not pretend that the interview

was torture. We sat by the fire and spun. The room was on the ground floor of the house and in the rear, overlooking the garden. His writing desk was in a bay window, and above it a crucifix was suspended. Near it, on the left wall, hung a large photograph of Pope Pius IX and his household. The Monsignor himself was not inconspicuous in this. About the room were a dozen or more photographs of celebrities. Among these was a photograph of Gladstone. "I keep that here as a penance," said Capel, to whom the name of the "Grand Old Man" was anathema.

Capel alluded to himself as a "lamb" in politics, but his allusion to politicians opposed to his way of thinking were anything but lamblike that early evening. He had published a pamphlet called "Great Britain and Rome, or Ought the Queen to Hold Diplomatic Relations with the Sovereign Pontiff?" Of course he held that she ought, and he said so to the immense disapproval of the majority of his fellow countrymen. He had also produced a pamphlet on the Irish Question which, then as now, could be counted on for enraging and puzzling half the population. The solution proposed by him, was, I believe, more Roman Catholicism, but why and how to get more of what was already in excess one did not see then, and sees now even less than before.

But Capel's star was dimming. His Catholic college, or university, or whatever it was, had failed for lack of support and faults of administration, and the financial troubles were soon to drive him to the

bankruptcy court, if they had not already done so. And His Eminence Cardinal Manning had thrown his influence against the captivating Monsignor. The Cardinal had his reasons, and, I suppose, they were good reasons. At any rate, like Shylock's, they were sufficient. When the Cardinal was against a man in his flock, that man's chances for preferment, and even for holding his own, were not worth discussing. Capel went to America in 1883. He sailed on the *Arizona* whose captain was the brother of my friend, Henry Murray. The Monsignor made a meteoric flash over the American continent. I saw him there. And then the continent swallowed him. He died in California, if not unknown then practically forgotten.

The sequel to my visit at Scarsdale Lodge was an article, and the article was sent, on chance, to the *Boston Herald*, then the leading newspaper in New England and of almost metropolitan importance. I did not know any one connected with the paper, not even the editor's name. But the article was printed, although I did not know that until some months later, at the end of 1882, when I turned up in Boston, at the *Herald* office, and asked for the editor, sending him my card with a message of inquiry about the article which I had posted to him from London some months earlier.

I intended to ask him for a job, for I had decided to settle awhile in Boston and turn my London experiences to account if the opportunity could be made.

A boy came to the room where I had waited on the anxious seat for an unhappy quarter of an hour.

"Mr. Holmes will see you," he said. "Come this way."

Holmes was the man's name, was it! Yes, John H. I had learned that much, and I followed the boy to an inner office. A dark-haired, slender, agreeable-mannered man, who looked rather like the Whitelaw Reid of that time, rose from his desk. As he did so I said:

"Mr. Holmes, I believe."

"Yes," said he, "and you are the writer of that article?" naming it.

"Yes," said I.

He held out his hand, and smiled. We shook hands, and I tried to look as if it were my daily occupation to be welcomed by the editors of powerful journals. Naturally, I did n't feel that way, and was nervously wondering what to say next. That anxiety vanished as the editor asked:

"Are you at liberty to do any more work of that kind, or of any special kind, for us?"

"Yes," said I, concealing, I hoped, my eagerness and delight.

"Then I will take as much as you are willing to write," said he, "and pay you ten dollars a column, and when you go anywhere for us, your expense bill."

This seemed a fair beginning, particularly as I had not been compelled to ask for it, as I had expected to do. When I closed the door behind me and descended the stairs, I felt an elation of spirit that was natural enough in a young chap who was more than five months short of his twenty-third birthday.

And so, with the beginning of 1883, I took the plunge into journalism. There followed five more or less adventurous years which carried me from one end of the country to the other and across the Atlantic and back again. Then in 1888, I was appointed London correspondent of the same paper, a position which I held for nine years until called elsewhere. It is with memories and impressions of the *London Days* of that time, and of some of their celebrated personages, that the following pages are concerned.

CHAPTER V

BROWNING AND MOSCHELES

You will look in vain now for the old brown-brick bungalow that stood, for the most part concealed by trees and shrubs, within the railings of the park-like enclosure halfway down Sloane Street, on the left-hand side, as you go from Knightsbridge. It stood there till the end of the eighties. If you walked there in the days of my early acquaintance with it, or glided through Sloane Street in a hansom, the chances were that the bungalow would still escape your glance, sheltered as it was by foliage. But from the top of any 'bus you could make it out readily, and you would wonder, as most 'bus fares did, what lucky or eccentric fellow lived within the very plain walls and had all that Cadogan enclosure as a back garden. Probably your neighbour on the 'bus top would tell you, 'bus neighbours being at all times well stocked with misinformation, that the favoured dwelling was the home of the gardener of the enclosure. But it was not. It was the home of my delightful friend, Felix Moscheles, and there you could find Robert Browning almost any Sunday afternoon when he was in London.

Felix Stone Moscheles was the son of Ignaz Moscheles, composer and pianist, whose intimate friendship with Mendelssohn is revealed in the latter's published correspondence. Felix was born in London February 8, 1833, at Number 3 Chester Place, Regent's Park, and Mendelssohn acted as his godfather at the christening in St. Pancras Church. Felix died at Tunbridge Wells, December 22, 1917. He was as kind a man as ever lived. He was an artist by profession, fond of music and musicians, as you might expect him to be; he spoke several languages fluently and with equal charm — English, French, German, Esperanto, and I know not what else — and he was passionately attached to movements for world peace. We know that nothing made for the peace of the world down to mid-1914; that while Germany had been deceiving it, the world had lulled itself to sleep with "drowsy syrups" and ecstatic daydreams. I think the awakening killed my dear old friend. That is not surprising. He was over eighty-one when the war broke out, and almost eighty-five when he died. Down to 1913, when I saw him last, I used to say that he was the youngest man of my acquaintance. He had the optimism of youth, its buoyant spirit, its gallant outlook.

When I first knew Moscheles he was only fifty-five or fifty-six, and he was passing cakes to the ladies, while his wife poured tea, and a stoutish man in a grey checked suit, and with grey moustache and chin-beard, was talking something which seemed like philosophy, and was certainly not

poetry, to a mixed group in a cosy corner. It was one of the happy points about Moscheles' Sunday afternoons that if you cared to continue talking with another caller and the other caller cared to continue to listen, or to talk with you, you were not routed up to exchange commonplaces about the weather with somebody else who needed to be assured that it rained, or that the sun was shining. You could flit from group to group, and find a place where you fitted, and the host or hostess would contrive, if you were unknown, to make you known to some one without interrupting some one else's story, so that no one was left adorning the wall.

The stoutish, grey man in the grey checked suit was Robert Browning whose afternoon-tea manner was quite simple, as unaffected as that of a bank-chairman contemplating dividends or deposits. He was not in the least a posing poet. He had been a great friend of Moscheles for a long time, and the latter spoke of him as "my literary godfather." Moscheles, at this time, was preparing for publication "Felix Mendelssohn's letters to Ignaz and Charlotte Moscheles." I had something to do with persuading him to write "In Bohemia with George Du Maurier." I had been looking in his studio through a mass of autograph letters and sketches relating to his years in Paris as an art student, the "Trilby" years, and, as Du Maurier's book and the play adapted from it were the rage of the time, Felix was encouraged to write around the letters he had, and Du Maurier's early sketches, and about the characters in the romance of the hour, and to

send some of the chapters to the *Century Magazine*, and afterward to produce the whole as a book.

Moscheles was brought up among celebrities, and was surrounded by the famous all his life. Mendelssohn, Joachim, Malibran, Lablache were, in his boyhood, family friends. He attracted distinguished persons as long as he lived. When he was thirteen the family moved from London to Leipzig, at Mendelssohn's instigation. Mendelssohn was eager that his friend, Moscheles' father, should become a professor in the Conservatoire which he was founding at Leipzig. And so the move was made, Ignaz Moscheles relinquishing his London career and its worldly advantages in order to live near his friend. Felix, who at ten had begun his education at King's College, London, had, at thirteen, to find it in Germany. But not for long; when he was seventeen, determined to become an artist, he began studying drawing and painting in Paris, at the Atelier Gleyre. Having seen something of the troubles of Germany in 1848, he was now to see the troubles of France which led to and followed the flight of Louis Philippe, and attended the *coup d'état*.

It was during the Atelier Gleyre period that he met George du Maurier and had the amusing experiences he described afterwards in the book to which I have alluded. From Paris he went to Antwerp, where he studied under Van Lorino at De Keyser's Academy, and where he had as fellow students Laurens Alma-Tadema, Maris, and Heyermans. I don't know when he returned to London

to settle down, but when he did so he began a career that was to be rich in friendships, helpful to all, and productive in portraiture.

As a portrait painter he was at his best, I think. As long ago as 1862, in his studio at Cadogan Gardens, he painted a portrait of Mazzini which, after Mazzini's death, he offered to present to Italy. But official Italy at that time was not desiring portraits of Mazzini and the offer was declined. Now, after the painter's death, the portrait goes to a museum at Milan. In 1882, Moscheles visited America, accompanying his friends Henry Irving and Ellen Terry on their first journey over the Atlantic. He painted Grover Cleveland, during the week when Cleveland was first elected to the Presidency, and talked with him of the subjects which absorbed the artist, — International Arbitration and Universal Peace. His portrait of Browning went to the Armour Institute, Chicago. Other portraits of his which were quite remarkable, which linger in the memory, were of his mother, Charlotte Moscheles, Rubinstein, H. M. Stanley, Gounod, Sarasate, Tom Mann, Israels, Stepniak, George Jacob Holyoake (at the age of eighty); he made beautiful water colours of Venice, of Spain, of Sicily, of Cairo, of Tunis, of Algerian subjects; and later was quite fascinated by his scheme of painting a series of "Pictures with a Purpose."

But the "Pictures with a Purpose" did not, I think, attract persons less purposeful than the painter. They were socialistic pictures, reforming, philanthropic, propagandist, as if the painter were

preaching by paint and canvas. I think his oral preaching was preferred.

I have mentioned the old brown-brick bungalow where Moscheles lived in Cadogan Gardens, where I first knew him, and first saw Robert Browning. Moscheles had lived there for I know not how many years, but when his lease expired, in the early nineties, the bungalow expired too. The march of "improvement" was coming down Sloane Street, and the bungalow was doomed. It disappeared from the gaze of surrounding and jealous neighbours who might have keys to the gardens but could not live in those pleasant demesnes. In the Elm Park Road, near the borders of Chelsea and Fulham, Moscheles found a house with an unusually large garden. He transformed the house and built a studio which he connected with it, and there one went to so many melodious evenings and artistic afternoons that through the years of recollection I seem to behold him hospitably dispensing tea and bread and butter, attended by swarms of musicians who were, or were to become, famous; by poets and painters who had found, or still were seeking, celebrity; by dreamers who were going to free Russia; or zealous gentlemen, like Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, who were not only labouring for the Hague Conferences but for the Parliament of Man.

It was there that Mark Hambourg first played when he came to London. I remember the occasion well enough, but not the music, for I cannot forget that phenomenally ugly youngster. He was then

only a boy. But the music rippled and thundered from his fingers, while that amazing head with its torrential hair cast shivering shadows over the magical keyboard. The unprepossessing youth was then unknown. He became known soon enough and he ran quickly to the fame that waits upon pianists of remarkable gifts.

Moscheles was a citizen of the world, which he regarded as his native country, so it was natural enough that he should take a lively interest in Esperanto in the days when people thought it a fad, and he became, as he remained, President of the London Esperanto Club. He was constantly corresponding with congenial folk in remote countries with the object of spreading the merits of Esperanto as an auxiliary language for international intercourse. "Even now," he said a generation ago, "I can go anywhere with it, and by its aid find somebody who will make me feel at home." He was a tireless propagandist. I would venture to say that he loved "propaganding" more than art. At any rate he could seldom avoid diluting his painting with propaganda in the contented Victorian era when little wars were fought every six months and trouble looked for between whiles. How easy it seemed in those days, when most of us were credulous, to achieve Liberty by lecturing!

Partly through his zeal for Esperanto and partly through his passion for a "Free Russia", he was particularly keen to meet Stepniak. I had known the latter for some years, having as long ago as 1885 or 1886 written an article about him for the *New*

York Tribune. The meeting with Moscheles was brought about one night at a "Smoke Talk" in my home in Cheyne Walk, and from that moment the two men became fast friends, remaining so until Stepniak's tragic death. Whether Stepniak had or had not killed an official in Russia I don't know, and I do not care much. If he had killed him I dare say the man deserved it, for, of all the plundering and oppressive gangs of officialdom, the Russians of that era had about the worst; they robbed like desperados and they ruled their land with lies, torture, and corruption. In a country capable of producing the "Revolution" of 1917 and the later Bolshevism, anything was possible in the mid-eighties, — anything except the shadow of freedom. The tall dark Russian with the thin beard and the thin squeaky voice was a striking contrast to Moscheles, who was grey, and rather short than tall, and whose quiet geniality was the bloom on a trustful, generous character that invited confidence. Stepniak used to say that he never became quite accustomed to the liberty of English life. The opposite character of Russian habits had bitten too deeply into him. I remember that when he first came to London he would look around furtively when in the street, and if we stopped at a corner to talk he would ask: "Will the police allow this? In Russia they would not after dark." If he had lived to see London during the Great War he might have felt much more at home.

No one was ever bored at the Moscheles' afternoons. How could one be bored when host and

hostess gave no thought to themselves but all their thought to their guests? Even the Swami I met there did not depress my spirits as many Swamis have done. I forget his name. I have met regiments of them in one country and another. Mostly they blazed, not with humility but importance. He, I say, had a worldly air, as if he were an Anglican bishop. He had also a sense of humour which was not entirely subdued as he listened to an American lady expounding the doctrine of "Votes for Women."

"Madame," said he, "may I ask a question?"

The lady looked assent.

"Your husband: does he share these views?"

"Not yet," she replied.

"Ah," said the Swami. And there were gusts of laughter.

"I may add," said the lady, "that I am not yet married."

Then the laughter came in shrieks, and the Swami smiled. But this, of course, was a generation before the suffragettes were brandishing hatchets like the Redmen, and burning churches and slashing paintings like the Huns.

But I have alluded to Browning, and have done so because whenever I think of Moscheles, I always think of him in association with Browning. Their friendship was very intimate, and that is one fact which shows the kind of man Moscheles was. After that glimpse and how-d'ye-do-good-bye at the old brown-brick bungalow which the Earl of Cadogan was so glad to destroy when the chance arrived to do so, it had been arranged by Moscheles and the

poet that we should meet again with another friend of the three at a little lunch of four. But fate, or, to be precise, politics, which may be another name for fate, decided otherwise, and I had to go far afield to chronicle the results. Never again did that little company come together unless it were at Browning's open grave, on the midday of the dying year. The reaper Death had mown quickly.

When the scene shifted to Westminster Abbey, I waited at the cloister doors till I could pass to a seat in the Poets' Corner. While waiting at the door, I heard from the pressing throng behind me the voice of an Irish writer whom I had known and had lost from sight five years before. While looking for the familiar face that belonged to the delicious brogue, there came the sound of a great key turning an ancient lock, and then the door swung open. "Come," said another friend, and we went in, getting separated before we had gone far, but taking seats near the draped grave.

Browning's son was chief mourner. The poet had died in his son's home, the Palazzo Rezzonico, in Venice. And now, this day at Westminster was the last day of 1889. The great bell of the Abbey began tolling; its deep notes floated down from its tower as they sought lodgment in the hearts of the assembling throng, and with every stroke some face appeared that all England, or the world, knew well. After thirty years I can recall many of the faces that the grey light of the dull day, softened by the colouring of the Abbey windows, fell upon. There were tiers of people. Even the openings in

the triforium revealed them, and by the great western doors they were packed, though they could catch but glimpses of the chancel, and most of them not that. Huxley's was the first face I saw. I had first seen it in the same place, almost on the same spot, years before, at Darwin's funeral. Max Muller and George Meredith were near him now. One thought that England sent her celebrated living men that day to meet the famous multitudes whose bodies have been laid away beneath the Abbey pavement for centuries upon centuries. There were Lord Wolseley and the Lord Chief Justice, Lord (then Professor) Bryce, Frederic Harrison, Holman Hunt, Henry Irving, Sidney Colvin, Whistler and Poynter and Alma-Tadema and Sir John Lubbock (afterwards Lord Avebury).

London was covered with a thickening fog. You could scarcely see the Abbey from Dean's Yard. Within the Abbey the arches aloft dissolved in mist, a mist of copper and pale gold where the light glanced through rose windows. Slipping into one's memory came Mrs. Browning's lines:

"— view the city perish in the mist
Like Pharaoh's armaments in the deep Red Sea,
The chariots, horsemen, footmen, all the host
Sucked down and choked to silence."

Candles from the choir places, and long-chained lamps, sent their soft, yellow gleams eerily through the veil which seemed to hang above us. And as the high noon drew near my glances fell upon the historians Kinglake, Lecky, and Froude. Would

any one of the three ever write of this scene in England's history, I wondered? Bret Harte, Burne-Jones, George du Maurier, Leslie Stephen, William Black, Bancroft, and John Hare, and the publishers Blackwood, Macmillan, Murray, and Spottiswoode, ambassadors and ministers, the heads of universities, of learned societies, were shown to their places, singly or in groups, or took positions where they could find them, standing against the monuments. And when no more people could find space, the Abbey clock struck twelve, and the great west doors swung open, and down the long central aisle came the funeral train. Then arose the choral music which for one hundred and seventy years has risen at every burial within the Abbey, the burial office composed and played by Croft and Purcell when they were organists at Westminster.

Sir Frederick Bridge is playing it now, as Robert Browning, all there is of him on earth, is carried on his bier through the dense throng, to pause a while at the foot of the chancel steps beneath the central lantern. Choir and clergy precede him. On either side of him walk Hallam Tennyson, Doctor Butler (of Trinity College, Cambridge), Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, Sir Theodore Martin, Archdean Farrar, Professor Masson, Professor Jowett (master of Balliol), Sir Frederick Leighton, Sir James Paget, Sir George Grove, George Murray Smith (Browning's publisher), and Professor Knight (of the University of St. Andrews). Then as the service proceeds (the Archbishop of Canterbury is here, Dean Vaughan, and others eminent in the

Church) the choristers sing a "Meditation" which Sir Frederick Bridge has composed to Mrs. Browning's poem:

"What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown to light the brows?
'He giveth His beloved sleep.'

"O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delved gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And 'giveth His beloved sleep.'

"His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slopes men sow and reap,
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
'He giveth His beloved sleep.'"

The organ and the choir paused; all sounds died away. God struck a silence through us all. It fell upon a throng that faced the world's loss as if suddenly confronted by the flight of the soul for whose absence all mourned. And just then there fell a shaft of sunlight, golden, magical, touching the bier, and then it faded slowly away. To many, very many among the silent company, the loss by this death was a personal one; to all it had more than a touch of that. It must be so when a great poet dies. What I remember as vividly as all else

was the great number of young faces in the Abbey, as if the rising generation did reverence to him who had passed.

By and by the last hymn had been sung, the Dean had pronounced the benediction, and Bridge, at the great organ, made the old Abbey thrill to its inmost stones with the vibrating tones of the Dead March from "Saul." Now the coffin had been lowered into its grave at the foot of Chaucer's tomb. Before us and at each hand were monuments, tablets, inlaid stones, marking the burial places of Spenser, Dryden, Gay, of Butler and Casaubon, Ben Jonson, Addison and Cowley, Prior, Macaulay and Grote; of Handel, Campbell, Sheridan, and Garrick. I stood on the grave of Dickens. And the throng passed slowly, reverently gazing into the dark grave where Browning's body had been laid as the old year was dying. Pealing through nave and transepts and the chapels of Kings, above the altar and the tombs of soldiers, sailors, statesmen — the brood who had made England and sung of her — the rumbling and trumpeting of the Dead March. Might not Shakespeare and Milton, Doctor Johnson, and Goldsmith and Gray have come to the Poets' Corner that day at noon to join the company, and to greet, from their own memorials, this other man who had helped to make England? It seemed quite probable as we passed from that real world into the world of fog, and the closing door of the Poets' Corner shut in behind us the now tremulous notes of the organ.

How often have I heard Sir Frederick stir the

slumbering majesty, beauty, and solemnity that lie within the Abbey organ, stir them to living wonder on occasions like this? More times than I can easily recall. In capitals and churches and cathedrals, in many parts of the world, that March from "Saul" has awakened memories within me. My earliest memory of music concerns itself with a military band, marching slowly, slowly down a hill, troops following with reversed arms, a gun carriage carrying something that was not a gun, covered with a flag; horses whose riders moved very slowly; coaches that young eyes saw as beyond number; and then a hole-in-the-ground. Men carried something on their shoulders from the gun carriage and lowered it into the hole; other men fired guns at the sky. A hawk flew full circle in the blue. And some one said, "My boy, take a last look where your father lies." Then the Dead March rolled and moaned again, and fixed itself on one of the pins of memory.

The solemn notes always bring back those moments, as a vision in which a small boy made his first acquaintance with Death. But they have never seemed to humble and exalt, moan and triumph and sob and victoriously march to the rhythm of the winds, so charged with majesty, as when Sir Frederick touched the heart of his instrument at the Abbey. The occasion, the place drenched with memories, the simple ceremony, the music's magic, and the mystery of it all make of this tribute to Death one of the rich experiences of living.

CHAPTER VI

PATTI

One broiling afternoon — it was in August, 1893 — a Great Western train from London left me at a wee-bit station on the top of a Welsh mountain. The station was called "Penwylt." It overlooked the Swansea Valley, and stood about halfway between Brecon and the sea. When a traveller alighted at Penwylt there was no need to ask why he did so. He could have but one destination, and that was Craig-y-Nos Castle, the home of Madame Patti. She was then Madame Patti-Nicolini; she afterward became the Baroness Cederström. I shall use here the name by which, for sixty years, she has been known to an adoring world. A carriage from the castle was awaiting me, and quickly it bore me down the steep road to the valley, a sudden turn showing the Patti palace there on the banks of the Tawe. The Castle was two miles distant and a thousand feet below the railway. An American flag was flying on the tower. It flew there through the week of my visit, for was I not an ambassador from the American Public to the Queen of Song?

Mr. Gladstone once told Madame Patti that he would like to make her Queen of Wales. But she

was that already, and more. She was Queen of Hearts the world over, and every soul with an ear was her liege. And, literally, in Wales Patti was very like a queen. She lived in a palace; people came to her from the ends of the earth; she was attended with "love, honour, troops of friends"; and whenever she went beyond her own immediate gardens the country folk gathered by the roadside, dropping curtseys and throwing kisses to her bonny majesty.

Her greeting of me was characteristic of this most famous and fortunate of women, this unspoiled favourite of our whirling planet. A group of her friends stood merrily chatting in the hall, and, as I approached, a dainty little woman with big brown eyes came running out from the centre of the company, stretched forth her hands, spoke a hearty welcome, and accompanied it with the inimitable smile which had made slaves of emperors. She had the figure and vivacity of a girl. She was fifty that year, but, there in broad daylight, looked fifteen or twenty years younger. This is not an illusion of gallantry, but a statement of fact.

There was a kind of family party at Craig-y-Nos. Stiffness and dullness, and the usual country-house talk about horses and guns, golf and fishing, did not prevail there. *La Diva's* guests were intimate friends, and chiefly a company of English girls who were passing the summer with her. In the evening, when all assembled in the drawing-room before going in to dinner, I found that we represented five nationalities, — Italian, Spanish, French, English,

and American. While we awaited the appearance of our hostess, the gathering seemed like a polyglot congress.

As the chimes in the tower struck the hour of eight, a fairy vision appeared at the drawing-room door, — Patti, royally gowned and jewelled. The defects of the masculine intellect leave me incapable of describing the costume of that radiant little woman. It belonged to one of her operatic characters, I forget which one. But my forgetfulness does n't matter. The sight brought us to our feet, bowing as if we had been a company of court gallants in the "spacious days of great Elizabeth", and we added the modern tribute of applause, which our queen acknowledged with a silvery laugh. I remember only that the gown was white and of some silky stuff, and that about *La Diva's* neck were loops of pearls, and that above her fluffy chestnut hair were glittering jewels. With women it may be different, but mere man cannot give a list of Patti's adornments on any occasion; he can know only that they became her, and that he saw only her happy face. Before our murmurs had ceased, Patti, who had not entered the room, but had merely stood in the portal, turned, taking the arm of the guest who was to sit at her right, and away we marched in her train, as if she were truly the queen, through the corridors to the conservatory, where dinner was served.

It was my privilege at the Castle table to sit at Madame Patti's left. At her right was one whose friendship with her dated from the instant of her

first European triumph. Heavens! — How many years ago? But it was a quarter of a century less than it now is at the time of which I am writing. The delight of those luncheons and dinners at Craig-y-Nos is unforgettable. There was a notion abroad that these meals were held "in state"; but they were not. There was merely the ordinary dinner custom of an English mansion. The menu, though, was stately enough, for the art of cookery was practised at Craig-y-Nos by a master who had earned the right to prepare dinners for Patti. The dining room was seldom used in summer for, handsome though that apartment is, Patti, and her guests, too, for that matter, preferred to be served in the great glass room which was formerly the conservatory and was still called so. There we sat, as far as outlook goes, out of doors; in whatever direction we gazed we looked up or down the Swansea Valley, across to the mountains, and along the tumbling course of the river Tawe. I was risking some neglect of my dinner, for I sat gazing at the wood-covered cliffs of Craig-y-Nos (Rock-of-the-Night) opposite, and listening to the ceaseless prattle of the mountain stream. Patti, noticing my admiration of the view, said, "You see what a dreadful place it is in which I bury myself."

"'Bury' yourself! On the contrary, here you are at the summit of Paradise, and you have discovered the fountain of perpetual youth. A 'dreadful place', indeed! It 's the nearest thing to fairyland."

"But one of your countrymen says that I 'hide

far from the world among the ugly Welsh hills.' He writes it in an American journal of fabulous circulation, and I suppose people believe the tale."

Patti laughed at the thought of a too credulous public, and then she added:

"Really, they write the oddest things about my home, as if it were either the scene of Jack-the-Giant-Killer's exploits on the top of the Beanstalk, or a prison in a desolate land."

After visiting Patti at Craig-y-Nos I wondered no more why this enchanting woman sang "Home, Sweet Home" so that she fascinated millions. Her own home was far from being "humble", but it was before all things, a home. And she had earned it. There is not anywhere a lovelier spot, nor was there elsewhere a place so remote and at the same time so complete in every resource of civilization.

Dinner passed merrily. Merrily is exactly the word to describe it. Up and down the table good stories flew, sometimes faster than one could catch them. Nobody liked a good joke better than Patti, and when she heard one that particularly pleased her she would interpret it to some guest who had not sufficiently mastered the language in which it was told. It was all sheer comedy, and after watching it, and hearing *La Diva* speak in a variety of tongues, I asked:

"I wonder if you have what people call a native tongue, or whether all of them came to you as a gift of the gods."

"Oh, I don't know so many languages," she

replied, "only — let 's see — English, German, Italian, Spanish, and Russian."

"And which do you speak best, or like best?"

"I really don't know. To me there is no difference, as far as readiness goes, and I suppose 'the readiness is all.'"

"Not quite all. But what is your favourite, if you have a favourite among them?"

"Oh, Italian! Listen!"

And then she recited an Italian poem. Next to hearing Patti sing, the sweetest sound was her Italian speech. Presently she said:

"Speaking of languages, Mr. Gladstone paid me a pretty compliment a little while ago — nearly three years ago. I will show you his letter to-morrow, if you care to see it."

Patti forgot nothing. The next day she brought me Mr. Gladstone's letter. The Grand Old Man had been among her auditors at Edinburgh, and after the performance he went on the stage to thank her for the pleasure she had given him. He complained a little of a cold which had been troubling him, and Patti begged him to try some lozenges which she found useful. That night she sent him a little box of them. The old statesman acknowledged the gift with this letter:

6, Rothesay Terrace,
Edinburgh.
October 22, 1890.

Dear Madame Patti:

I do not know how to thank you enough for your charming gift. I am afraid, however, that the use

of your lozenges will not make me your rival. *Voce quastata di ottante' anni non si ricupera.*

It was a rare treat to hear from your Italian lips last night the songs of my own tongue, rendered with a delicacy of modulation and a fineness of utterance such as no native ever in my hearing had reached or even approached. Believe me,

Faithfully yours,
W. E. GLADSTONE.

This letter, naturally enough, gave conversation a reminiscent turn. After some talk of great folk she had known, I asked Madame Patti what had been the proudest experience in her career.

"For a great and unexpected honour most gracefully tendered," said she, "I have known nothing that has touched me more deeply than a compliment paid by the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) and a distinguished company, at a dinner given to the Duke of York and the Princess May (the present King and Queen), a little while before their wedding. The dinner was given by Mr. Alfred Rothschild, one of my oldest and best friends. There were many royalties present and more dukes and duchesses than I can easily remember. During the ceremonies the Prince of Wales arose, and to my astonishment, proposed the health of his 'old and valued friend, Madame Patti.' He made *such* a pretty speech, and in the course of it said that he had first seen and heard me in Philadelphia in 1860, when I sang in 'Martha', and that since then his own attendance at what he was good enough to call my 'victories in the realm of song' had been among his pleasantest recollec-

tions. He recalled the fact that on one of the occasions, when the Princess and himself had invited me to Marlborough House, his wife had held up little Prince George, in whose honour we were this night assembled, and bade him kiss me, so that in after life he might say that he had 'kissed the famous Madame Patti.' And then, do you know, that whole company of royalty, nobility, and men of genius rose and cheered me and drank my health. Don't you think that any little woman would be proud, and ought to be proud, of a spontaneous tribute like that?"

It is difficult, when repeating in this way such snatches of biography, to suggest the modest tone and manner of the person whose words may be recorded. It is particularly difficult in the case of Madame Patti, who was absolutely unspoiled by praise. Autobiography such as hers must read a little fanciful to most folk; it is so far removed from the common experiences of us all and even from the extraordinary experiences of the renowned persons we hear about usually. But there was not a patch of vanity in Patti's sunny nature. Her life had been a long, unbroken record of success, — success to a degree attained by no other woman. No one else has won and held such homage; no one else had been so wondrously endowed with beauty and genius and sweet simplicity of nature, — a nature unmarred by flattery, by applause, by wealth, by the possession and exercise of power. Patti at fifty was like a girl in her ways, in her thoughts, her spirit, in her disinterestedness, in her enjoy-

ments. Time had dimmed none of her charms, it had not lessened then her superb gifts. She said to me one day:

"They tell me I am getting to be an old woman, but I don't believe it. I don't feel old. I feel young. I am the youngest person of my acquaintance."

That was true enough, as they knew who saw Patti from day to day. She had all the enthusiasm and none of the affectations of a young girl. When she spoke of herself it was with most delicious frankness and lack of self-consciousness. She was perfectly natural.

She promised to show me the programme of that Philadelphia performance before the Prince of Wales so long ago, and the next day she put it before me. It was a satin programme with gilt fringe, and it was topped by the Prince of Wales's feathers. At that Philadelphia performance Patti made her first appearance before royalty. In the next year she made her London début at Covent Garden, as Amina in "La Somnambula." The next morning Europe rang with the fame of the new prima donna from America.

"I tried to show them that the young lady from America was entitled to a hearing," said she, as we looked over the old programmes.

"And has 'the young lady from America' kept her national spirit, or has she become so much a citizen of the world that no corner of it has any greater claim than another upon her affections?"

"I love the Italian language, the American people,

the English country, and my Welsh home," she said.

"Good! The national preferences, if you can be said to own any, have reason on their side. Your parents were Italian, you were born in Spain, you made your first professional appearance in America, you first won international fame in England, and among these Welsh hills you have planted a paradise."

"How nice of you! That evening at Mr. Alfred Rothschild's, the Prince of Wales asked me why I do not stay in London during 'the season', and take some part in its endless social pleasures. 'Because, your Royal Highness,' I replied, 'I have a lovely home in Wales, and whenever I come away from it I leave my heart there.' 'After all,' said the prince, 'why should you stay in London when the whole world is only too glad to make pilgrimages to Craig-y-Nos?' Was n't that nice of him?"

I despair of conveying any impression of the *naïveté* with which the last five words were uttered. The tone expressed the most innocent pleasure in the world. When Patti spoke in that way she seemed to be wondering why people should say and do so many pleasant things on her account. There was an air of childish surprise in her look and voice.

I said: "All good republicans have a passion for royalty. I find that an article about a King, or a Queen, or a Prince is in greater demand in the United States than anywhere else in the world. So tell me something more about the Prince and Princess of Wales. I promise, as a zealous democrat, that

no one on the far side of the Atlantic will skip a word. Have the Prince and Princess visited Craig-y-Nos?"

"No. But they were coming here a couple of years ago. See — here is the Prince's letter fixing the date. But it was followed by the death of the Duke of Clarence, their eldest son, and then for many months they lived in quiet and mourning, only appearing in their usual way just before the wedding of the Duke of York (King George V). They sent me an invitation to the wedding festivities. But alas! I could not go. I had just finished my season and was lying painfully ill with rheumatism. You heard of that? For weeks I suffered acutely. It 's an old complaint. I have had it at intervals ever since I was a child. But about that royal wedding. When the Prince and Princess of Wales learned that I was too ill to accept their gracious invitation, they — well, what do you suppose they did next?"

"Something kind and graceful."

"They sent me two large portraits of themselves, bearing their autographs and fitted into great gilt frames. You shall see the portraits after dinner. They have the places of honour at Craig-y-Nos."

We had reached the coffee stage of dinner, and the cigars were being passed. The ladies did not withdraw, according to the mediæval (and shall I say popular?) habit, but the company remained unbroken, and while the gentlemen smoked, the ladies kept them in conversation. Nowadays you would say they all smoked. Presently, some one

proposed Patti's health, and we all stood, singing, "For She 's a Jolly Good Fellow."

That put the ball of merriment in motion again. One of the young ladies, a goddaughter of the hostess, carolled a stanza from a popular ditty. At first I thought it audacious that any one should sing in the presence of *La Diva*. It seemed sacrilege. But in another instant we were all at it, piping the chorus, and Patti leading off. The fun of the thing was infectious. The song finished, we ventured another, and Patti joined us in the refrains of a medley of music-hall airs, beginning with London's latest mania, "Daisy Bell, or a Bicycle Built for Two", and winding up with Chevalier's "Old Kent Road" and the "Coster's Serenade", Coborn's "Man That Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo", and somebody else's "Daddy Would n't Buy me a Bow-Wow."

Patti turned with an arch look. "You will think our behaviour abominable."

"No, I don't. I think it jolly. Besides, it 's not everybody who has heard you sing comic songs."

Her answer was a peal of laughter, and then she sat there, singing very softly a stanza of "My Old Kentucky Home", and as we finished the chorus she lifted a clear, sweet note, which thrilled us through and through and stirred us to excited applause.

"What have I done?" Patti put the question with a puzzled air.

The reply came from the adjoining library: "High E." One of our number had run to the piano.

Then I recalled what Sir Morell Mackenzie had told me a little while before he died. We were chatting in that famous room of his in Harley Street, and we happened to mention Madame Patti. "She has the most wonderful throat I have ever seen," said Sir Morell. "It is the only one I have ever seen with the vocal cords in absolutely perfect condition after many years of use. They are not strained, or warped or roughened, but as I tell you, they are perfect. There is no reason why they should not remain so ten years longer, and with care and health twenty years longer."

Remembering this, I asked Patti if she had taken extraordinary care of her voice.

"I have never tired it," said she; "I never sing when I am tired, and that means I am never tired when I sing. And I have never strained for high notes. I have heard that the first question asked of new vocalists nowadays is 'How high can you sing?' But I have always thought *that* the least important matter in singing. One should sing only what one can sing with perfect ease."

"But in eating and drinking? According to all accounts, you are the most abstemious person in the world."

"No, indeed! I avoid very hot and very cold dishes, otherwise I eat and drink whatever I like. My care is chiefly to avoid taking cold and to avoid indigestion. But these are the ordinary precautions of one who knows that health is the key to happiness."

"And practising? Have you rigid rules for that? One hears of astounding exercise and self-denial."

"Brilliant achievements in fiction. For practising I run a few scales twenty minutes a day. After a long professional tour I let my voice rest for a month and do not practise at all during that time."

During my visit to Craig-y-Nos we usually spent our evenings in the billiard rooms. There were two, an English room and a French one. In the French room there was a large orchestrion which had been built in Geneva for Madame Patti. It was operated by electricity and was said to be the finest instrument of its kind. Our hostess would start it of an evening, and the ingenious contrivance would "discourse most eloquent music" from a repertoire of one hundred and sixteen pieces, including arias from grand operas, military marches and simple ballads. Music, of course, is the fascinator that Patti cannot resist. The simplest melody stirs her to song. In the far corner from the orchestrion she would sit in a big easy-chair, and hum the air that rolled from the organ pipes, keeping time with her dainty feet, or moving her head as the air grew livelier. Or she would send forth some larklike trill, or urge the young people to a dance, or a chorus, and when every one was tuned to the full pitch of melody and merriment, she would join in the fun as heartily as the rest. I used to sit and watch her play the castanets, or hear her snatch an air or two from "Martha", "Lucia", or "Traviata."

One night the younger fry were chanting negro melodies, and Patti came into the room, warbling as if possessed by an ecstasy. "I love those darky songs," said she, and straightway she sang to us,

with that inimitable clarity and tenderness which were hers alone, "Way Down upon the Suwanee River", "Massa 's in the Col', Col' Ground", and after that "Home, Sweet Home", while all of us listeners felt more than we cared to show.

Guests at Craig-y-Nos were the most fortunate of mortals. If the guest were a man, a valet was told off to attend him; if the guest were a lady, a maid was placed at her service. Breakfast was served in one's room at any hour one chose. Patti never came down before high noon. She rose at half-past eight, but remained until twelve in her apartments, going through her correspondence with her secretary and practising a little music. At half-past twelve luncheon was served in the glass pavilion. After that hour a guest was free to follow his own devices until dinner time. He might go shooting, fishing, riding, walking, or he might stroll about the lovely demesne, and see what manner of heavenly nook nature and Patti had made for themselves among the hills of Wales. Patti's castle is in every sense a palatial dwelling. She saw it fifteen years before I did, fell in love with it, purchased it, and subsequently expended great sums in enlarging it. The castellated mansion, with the theatre at one end and the pavilion and winter garden at the other, has a frontage of fully a thousand feet along the terraced banks of the Tawe. But the place has been so often described that it is unnecessary to repeat that oft-told story, or to give details of the gasworks, the electric-lighting station, the ice plant and cold-storage rooms, the steam

laundry, the French and English kitchens, the stables, the carriage houses, the fifty servants, or of the watchfulness, care, devotion, which surrounded the melodious mistress of this miniature kingdom. Those matters are a part of the folklore of England and America.

But I must say something of Patti's little theatre. It was her special and particular delight. She got more pleasure from it than from any other of the many possessions at Craig-y-Nos. It was a gem of a theatre, well proportioned and exquisitely decorated. Not only could the sloping floor be quickly raised, so that the auditorium might become a ballroom, but the appurtenances of the stage were elaborate and complete. For this statement I had the authority of the stage manager of the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden. This expert was supervising certain alterations at the Patti theatre while I was at Craig-y-Nos, and he told me that the house then contained every accessory for the production of forty operas!

Patti sang occasionally at concerts in her theatre. All her life she treasured her voice for the public; she had never exhausted it by devising an excess of entertainment for her personal friends. And so most of the performances in the little theatre were pantomimic. Although Patti seemed to me always to be humming and singing while I was at the Castle, yet there was nothing of the "performing" order in what she did. She merely went singing softly about the house, or joining in our choruses, like a happy child.

One morning, while a dozen of us were sitting in the shade of the terrace, the ladies with their fancy work, the men with their papers, books, and cigars, we heard, from an open window above, a burst of song, full-throated like a bird's. It was for all the world like the song of a skylark, of glorious ecstasy, as if the bird were mounting in the air, the merrier as it soared the higher, until it poured from an invisible height a shower of joyous melody. No one amongst us stirred, or made a sound. *La Diva* thought us far away up the valley, where we had planned an excursion, but we had postponed the project to a cooler day. We remained silent, listening. Our unseen entertainer seemed to be flitting about her boudoir, singing as she flitted, snatching a bar or two from this opera and that, revelling in the fragment of a ballad, or trilling a few notes like our friend the lark. Presently she ceased, and we were about to move, when she began to sing "Comin' Thro' the Rye." She was alone in her room, but she was singing as gloriously as if to an audience of ten thousand in the Albert Hall. The unsuspected group of listeners on the terrace slipped then from their own control, and took to vigorous applause and cries of "*brava, brava.*"

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried the birdlike voice above.

We looked up, and saw Patti leaning out at the casement.

"Oh," said she, "I could n't help it, really I could n't. I 'm so happy!"

At luncheon she proposed an entertainment in the theatre for the evening of the following day.

We were to have "Camille" in pantomime. The preparations moved swiftly. Among the guests were several capable amateur actors. The performance began a little after ten. Some musicians were brought from Swansea. A dozen gentlefolk hastily summoned from the valley, those among the guests who were not enrolled for the pantomime, and a gallery full of cottagers and servants made up the audience. We had "an opera" in five acts of pantomime, with orchestra, and all together it was fun. Of course, Patti carried off the honours. There was supper after the play, and the sunlight crept into the Swansea Valley within two hours after we had risen from table.

I said to Patti after the pantomime, "You don't seem to believe that change of occupation is the best possible rest. You seem to work as hard at rehearsing and acting in your little theatre as if you were 'on tour.'"

"Not quite! Besides, it is n't work, it 's play," replied the miraculous little woman. "I love the theatre. And, then, there is always something to learn about acting. I find these pantomime performances useful as well as amusing."

Every afternoon about three o'clock Patti and her guests went for a drive, a small procession of landaus and brakes rattling along the smooth country roads. You could see at once that this was Pattiland. The cottagers came to their doors and saluted her Melodious Majesty, and the children of the countryside ran out and threw kisses.

"Oh! the dears," exclaimed the kind-hearted

Queen, as we were driving toward the village of Ystradgynlais (they call it something like "Ist-rag-dun-las"), one afternoon. "I would like to build another castle and put all those mites into it, and let them live there with music and flowers!" And I believe she would have given orders for such a castle straightway, had there been a builder in sight.

On the way home Patti promised me "a surprise" for the evening. I wondered what it might be, and when the non-appearance of the ladies kept the gentlemen waiting in the drawing-room at dinner time, I was the more puzzled. The men, to pass the time, inspected the "trophies" of the prima donna. It would be impossible to enumerate them because Craig-y-Nos Castle was another South Kensington Museum in respect to the treasures it held. Every shelf, table, and cabinet was packed with gifts which Patti had received from all parts of the earth, from monarchs and millionaires, princes and peasants, old friends and strangers. There was Marie Antoinette's watch, to begin with, and there were portraits of the Prince and Princess of Wales, to end with. There was a remarkable collection of portraits of royal personages, presented to Patti by the distinguished originals on the occasion of her marriage to M. Nicolini. Photographs of the Grand Old Man of Politics and the Grand Old Man of Music rested side by side on a little table presented by some potentate. Gladstone's likeness bore his autograph and the inscription, "*Con tanti e tanti Complimenti*"; Verdi's, his autograph and a fervent tribute written at Milan. There were crowns and

wreaths and rare china; there were paintings and plate, and I know not what, wherever one looked.

If one were to make Patti a gift, and he had a King's ransom to purchase it, he would find it difficult to give her anything that would be a novelty, or that would be unique in her eyes. She had everything. For my part, I would pluck a rose from her garden, or gather a nosegay from a hedgerow, and it would please her as much as if it were a diadem. She valued the thought that prompted the giving, rather than the gift itself. She never forgot even the smallest act of kindness that was done for her sake. And she was always doing kindnesses for others. I have heard from the Welsh folk many tales of her generosity. And to her friends she was the most open-handed of women.

There was one dark, drizzly day during the visit to Craig-y-Nos. It mattered little to the men. The wet did not interfere with their amusements. But every lady wore some precious jewel that Patti had given her that morning, — a ring, a brooch, a bracelet, as the case might be. For the generous creature thought her fair friends would be disappointed because they could not get out of doors. How could she know that every one in the Castle welcomed the rain because it meant a few hours more with Patti?

The "surprise" she had spoken of was soon apparent. The ladies came trooping into the drawing-room wearing the gowns and jewels of Patti's operatic rôles. Patti herself came last, in "Leonora's" white and jewels. What a dinner-party we

had that night, — we men, in the prim black and white of evening dress, sitting there with "Leonora" and "Desdemona" and "Marguerite" and "Rachel" and "Lucia" and "Carmen" and "Dinorah", and I know not how many more! Nobody but Patti would have thought of such merry masquerading, or, having thought of it, would or could have gone to the trouble of providing it.

Of course, we talked of her favourite characters in opera, and then of singers she had known. She said it would give her real pleasure to hear Mario and Grisi again, or, coming to later days, Scalchi and Annie Louise Carey. The latter, being an American and a friend, I was glad to hear this appreciation of her from the Queen of Song. "Carey and Scalchi were the two greatest contraltos I have known; and I have sung with both of them. I remember Annie Louise Carey as a superb artist and a sweet and noble woman."

I said "Hear, hear," in the parliamentary manner, and then Patti added:

"Now we will go to the theatre again. There is to be another entertainment." It was, of all unexpected things, a lantern show. Patti's arrangement for that was, like everything else at Craig-y-Nos, from her piano to her pet parrot, the only one of its kind. It was capable of giving, with all sorts of "mechanical effects", a two hours' entertainment every night for two months without repeating a scene. Patti invited me to sit beside her and watch the dissolving views. It seemed to me that it would be like this to sit beside Queen Victoria

during a "State performance" at Windsor, only not half so much fun! Here was Patti Imperatrice, dressed like a queen, wearing a crown of diamonds, and attended by her retinue of brilliantly attired women and attentive gentlemen of the court. And it was so like her to cause the entertainment to end with a series of American views and to sing for me "Home, Sweet Home", as we looked out on New York harbour from a steamship inward bound.

The next morning I started from Craig-y-Nos for America. As the dogcart was tugged slowly up the mountain side, the Stars and Stripes saluted me from the Castle tower, waving farewell as I withdrew from my peep at Paradise.

CHAPTER VII

JOHN STUART BLACKIE

The wind was from the east, the Scotch "mist" from everywhere, but Professor Blackie had a sunny heart that made one forget the raw weather. I thought the sun was shining and the skies blue when I went to lunch at Number 9 Douglas Crescent, Edinburgh, one November day in the early nineties.

Almost any day in half a century you might have seen Professor Blackie striding through Edinburgh as strong as an athlete, hearty as a young hunter. One morning I encountered him as he was beating eastward against half a gale, his cape flying, his cloud of white hair tossing against his big-brimmed, soft black hat, his cheeks rosy with the winter wind, and his kind eyes dancing with the delight he felt in exercise. He was eighty-five!

I told him of reading somewhere that he loved to play the peripatetic philosopher. How he laughed! "Do they say that of me? Ho, ho, ho!" And then he trolled a "Hi-ti-rumty-tum", snatching an air, as his habit was, from a half-forgotten song, and ending with an exclamatory line of Greek. He looked like a prophet apostrophising the gods.

"And they say I speak 'a confusion of tongues.'

Don't mind that," said he. "Greek, Latin, Gaelic, German, English — all are one to me. I borrow the words that come readiest for the thought. But Greek is the great language." And he strode down the hill.

He was the most picturesque figure then living in Edinburgh, and many thought him the greatest man in the Scotland of those times. He was the "Grand Old Man" of that northern kingdom, and in vitality and spirits and capacity for work he was at eighty-five the youngest man I knew. He was packed with wisdom and overflowing with music and merriment. If he had not been so musical and so merry you might have called him Scotland incarnate. Doubtless he was that, with the music and merriment added. As for character, even Scotland never produced a nobler one, nor set it in a more imposing figure, or in a grander head. Scholar, poet, philosopher, teacher, learner, political writer, lover of the classics, strenuous believer in modern progress, he was sure that the world was never better than in his day, the Victorian day, and that it was growing better steadily. They were all optimists then. Lord Salisbury, when prime minister, added that they were all socialists. Professor Blackie drew the line at that. Perhaps Salisbury was quoting Harcourt.

Visiting in Glasgow, I received one morning a note from him inviting me to lunch at his house in Edinburgh. On the lower, left-hand corner of the envelope he had written a line of Greek, as his custom was. This time it was an adjuration:

"Speak the truth in love." But who could speak of him in other words than those of love? In his note he had written "Come and talk." But he did all the talking. What an inspiring flood it was!

No sooner was I in his hall than I heard, to my disappointment, the sound of what seemed lively conversation from an adjoining room. I had hoped to find him alone. The prospect of a luncheon party dampened my ardour. But when the maid conducted me to the presence, there sat the Scottish sage alone, declaiming a Gaelic poem. At least he told me it was Gaelic!

"Laugh," cried he, "laugh. 'T will do ye good. Ah, y' are one o' the laughin' men! I like them. Try a man; will he no' laugh, or smile, don't tie to him. There 's too much gloom in the world."

What a picture he was in that hour. Yes, and hours after, when I left him. The tall old man with strong, smooth-shaven face, like one of the traditional gods of his favourite lore, but in no other respect resembling a mythological being. His head was crowned, not with laurel, but with a wide-brimmed Panama or leghorn hat, beneath which streamed his long white hair. And his body was lost in the embraces of a blue dressing-gown which came to his heels; and around his waist were yards of red silk sash, the ends of which trailed behind him.

"Punctual," said he. "You are sharp to the minute. Came by the eleven train, eh? An hour and five minutes on the rail. Wonderful how we live now! Glasgow to Edinburgh and return,

ninety-six miles for seven shillings and sixpence, first class. The quickest travelling in the world, and the cheapest. That 's one thing the auld Greeks could na' do. Fol-de-rol-de-rol-de-ri. Progress, progress; I believe in it. I 'm a marching man. There 's nae such thing as standin' still; you go forward, or you fall back. Will ye ring the bell? I thank ye! Bachelor's hall the day. My wife is in the country, but we will try to be comfortable."

While we ate Professor Blackie talked, burst into snatches of melody, rippled in Greek, or thundered in German, or gave the dear twist of Scotland to his words, or, when he thought there had been enough of that, drew from the "well of English, pure and undefiled." And all the time he wore his hat!

"You won't mind, I know," he said. "Eighty-five and no glasses to my eyes. There 's protection in the shade of a hat's brim. Eighty-five and no glasses! The only proof I 'm eighty-five is the almanac. There 's no proof in my body. I 'm as young as ever there." And then he turned the Greek tap so that Aristotle larded the lunch.

He had been in love with Greek for more than sixty years; he taught it for thirty or forty years; he knew it as well as he knew English; he read modern Greek newspapers; he had the best Greek library in the kingdom; I daresay he dreamed in Greek. I said: "You talk as if, in spirit, you were more a Greek than a Scotsman."

"Not that" — he half sang the words — "Oh,

bonny Scotland for me. A man should stick to the land where God put him!"

He drew the knife along the breast of a chicken. "My wife won't let me carve when she 's at home," he said. He looked threateningly at a joint. "Never mind, never mind," said he, and then in a chant, "hey nonny, hi nonny." Pause. Then "Come off, old boy," and a wing and a leg clattered to the platter. "The nearer the bone the sweeter the meat," said he. "But statesmen have carved empires more easily."

"Mr. Gladstone, for example," said I, referring to the Home Rule Bill.

"Ho, there; but he has n't performed the amputation!"

"You don't agree with your old friend about that policy?"

"No, nor about Greek. But we are friends still. As for discussion, we began that when we first met. How many tens of years ago was that? We have been discussing ever since. Yes, forty years! We met at Dean Ramsey's house. Gladstone was a splendid man to disagree with even then."

As Professor Blackie talked of his friends, the names of nearly all his contemporaries in England, Scotland, and Germany came hurrying forth. But he would n't tell anecdotes about them for two reasons; first, he never remembered good stories; second, "I don't live in the past," he said. He was not a good talker, if good talk means keeping up your end in conversation. He kept up more than his end. He was always ready for a monologue.

He did n't converse, he exploded. His utterances were volcanic. There would come an eruption of short sentences blazing with philosophy; then a kindly glow over it all, and the discharge would subside quickly with a gentle rumty-tum, or a snatch from some old Scotch ballad. We had been talking of education. Suddenly the table shook under a smiting hand, and these words were shot at me:

"Teaching! We are teaching our young men everything except this: to teach themselves, and to look the Lord Jesus Christ in the face! You are doing it in America, too. You are as bad as we are in Britain." And then immediately, and with a seraph's smile, "May I pass you a wing?"

He quoted from one of his books, a recent one: "Of all the chances that can befall a young man at his first start in the race of life, the greatest unquestionably is to be brought into contact, and, if possible, to enter into familiar relations with a truly great man. For this is to know what manhood means, and a manly life, not by grave precept, or wise proverb, or ideal picture; but to see the ideal in complete equipment and compact in reality before you, as undeniably and as efficiently as the sun that sheds light from the sky, or the mountain that sheds waters into the glen."

Strong influences were about Blackie's life in his youth, and he became, in his turn, a great influence in other lives. He was the son of a Scotch banker, and was born in Glasgow. He had his first schooling in Aberdeen, and he entered college at twelve and the University of Edinburgh at fifteen. At

the latter place he studied under John Wilson ("Christopher North"). At Aberdeen he had the best Latin instruction of his time. There they were famous Latinists. At the University of Edinburgh it was mainly religion with him, and the Bible his favourite reading. At twenty he went to Germany, the Germany that is dead. His strong grave face would light up when he spoke of the men he had known there.

"Niebuhr was the biggest man Germany has produced, but Bunsen was the greatest all round. Bunsen looked like Goethe. I told him so, and found that others thought so. But Bunsen had a sweeter mouth than Goethe. My father's teaching, the nature that God gave me, and Bunsen's influence, have been the shaping forces of my life.

"I returned to Scotland, was called to the bar at twenty-five, and ran away from it at thirty. I was not meant for a lawyer. Aberdeen University made me its Professor of Latin Literature, and I kept at that till 1852, when Edinburgh appointed me Professor of Greek. I was thirty years at that time. A few years ago I retired. There is the story of my life."

No. Only the story of the shell of his life. It said nothing of what he had done.

"Done!" exclaimed the old man. "If you live to be as old as John Blackie, you 'll find it less important to know what a man has done than to know what he is. Done? I 've taught Greek, written a little, preached a good deal!"

But many men teach Greek, and everybody writes

nowadays, and the globe is a vast pulpit from which all who are not dumb try to preach, while only the deaf long to listen. John Stuart Blackie's achievements are not to be measured by phrases. He was one of the strong teachers of men. Many men now celebrated have told me that they studied under him and learned little Greek but more wisdom than an entire faculty could teach them, or any number of books. "The art of the teacher is to teach the student to teach himself", the old man was fond of saying.

Blackie was a marching man, you will remember. For years he marched across Scotland, and up and down, lecturing the people. If Scotland had a hall in which he did not lecture on Burns, on Goethe, on Scottish Song, Education, Government — to his list of themes there was no end — it must have been built since his death. No wonder they called him a "peripatetic philosopher."

He said to me: "I think I can do more good by speaking to people than by writing to them. I have written thirty or forty volumes, if you count the little ones, but I don't know how to write books to please the public."

"How can that be?" I asked. "A bookseller told me that your 'Self-Culture' has already run to thirty editions."

"Oh, that was not written for the public, but for my students; and the public happened to like it."

"A distinction without much difference then." And I thought of his "Essays on Social Subjects", "Four Phases of Morals", "Homer and the Iliad",

and the book "On Beauty"; of his "Songs of Religion and Life", "The Language and Literature of the Scottish Highlands", "Musa Burschicosa", "Songs and Legends of Ancient Greece", "Scottish Song", "Poetical Tracts", and so on. The public had seemed to like them. And the public of Edinburgh must have found some attraction in his novel "Altavona", for, he said, "They made a great row over it here, thought they had identified one of the characters, and went buzzing about over their discovery. But I 'm not a novelist. I was trying to effect reform in the Scottish Land Laws. I believe in Home Rule for Scotland," he added.

"Why not, then, for Ireland?" This was putting one's head into the lion's mouth. But he purred gently: "I don't know Ireland! I 've been there only once!" That was a fair hit at Gladstone. "Scotland I do know!" The last words came like a blast from the mountains.

Once on a time Professor Blackie printed a list of one hundred and twelve Scottish songs, and he declared that every Scotsman should know them all. I suppose it was patriotism even more than a love of learning that impelled him to raise £10,000 by four years' labour, and endow with it, at Edinburgh, a Professorship of Celtic Literature.

He lived on an edge of Edinburgh, and his house overflowed with books and pictures. It commanded a northerly outlook, and the country rolled up almost to the windows. "Look there," said he, pointing to the big window of the dining room, "the sun's out, and you can see the Fife Hills. I see them about

three times a month when our mists lift. The Forth Bridge is yonder" — pointing. "Wonderful thing that Forth Bridge. You whiz through towards Perth in five minutes!"

Above the fireplace was a large portrait of himself, painted years before by James Archer, of the Royal Scottish Academy. It represented its subject gazing, with head uncovered, at a mountainous landscape. "That 's the poetic Blackie," said the original, "the Blackie who loves to roam hills and glens. Yon is Blackie militant," pointing to a severer portrait on the opposite wall. "A very different person, as you see. A painter can show only one aspect of a character in a single portrait, and the public, seeing but one portrait, will see but one side of the character. That 's why there are several Blackies on these walls. Come and see my friends as they hang."

He led the way to the entrance hall whose walls were hung with paintings, engravings, photographs, old prints. A bust of "Christopher North" occupied a pedestal at the foot of the stairs. "And there 's Nolly," sang the Professor, pointing to an oil likeness of Cromwell. We would take a step or two, and then pause to look at a portrait, while my energetic host threw out an explanatory phrase whimsically abbreviating the names of the men he liked best. "Tom," said he, "Tom Carlyle, a tyrannical genius who did a lot of good in a hard way. Bobbie," and he stopped before a portrait of Burns, "Bobbie was a ploughman, but the artist here made him a dandy, and he never was that."

We must have stopped twenty times on the first flight of stairs, and at each pause the old man would shoot a remark. At the drawing-room door he paused again, exclaiming: "Aristotle, Shakespeare, Goethe, and the Apostle Paul — these are my heroes!"

The drawing-room was a national, or rather an international portrait gallery in little. We began with a line of faces at one end of which was Goethe, at the other end Bunsen. There were portraits everywhere, on the walls, in the chairs, on the tables; some of them rested on the floor. Sir Henry Irving as Becket had a chair. Blackie stopped in front of him. "That 's a man who has done a great work," said he. "The people require amusement, and Irving has amused them nobly. Ah, you see Mary Anderson over there. A marvellous sweet woman. Scott 's next to her on that wall, now. Ah, no, I never saw him. I wish I had known him. 'Green grow the rushes, O!' Here are some preachers — Chalmers, John Knox, Guthrie, Norman Macleod, Cardinal Manning. Ye 'll think it a queer assortment, maybe, John Knox and Manning. Well, the five o' them were men, man, men!"

"Dear, dear, who has done this thing?" he cried, as if startled. We stood before an easel which held a portrait of himself. An engraving of Gladstone stood beneath, on the floor. "Wrong! It 's the wrong order," said he. "We must change it. Down goes Blackie; up goes Gladdy. He belongs above me." He suited the action to the word and shifted the portraits.

Presently we marched up another flight of stairs to his study, which consisted of three connecting rooms lined with books. "This is where I live," he said. "Seven thousand volumes hereabout. See the Greek here, here, everywhere. Man, man, Greek is the only living bridge between the present and the past!"

Then, snatching up a handful of newspapers from Athens, he continued, "Some folks call Greek a dead language. Poor souls! They don't know any better. These things should interest you. They are fresh from Athens; not a week old." And then he read aloud from them, a bit of politics, an advertisement, lines from the bargain counter, as if to show that one touch of shopping makes the whole world kin. "But no heroes, man, no heroes! There 's no Aristotle now, no Shakespeare, no Goethe, no Apostle Paul!"

We sat awhile in the study, and Blackie "surveyed mankind from China to Peru" in lightning flashes. He always left one panting behind, breathless, trying to keep pace with his rushing thoughts. He had done that sort of thing all his teaching life, and that was why men said they learned but little Greek from him, but absorbed streams of wisdom. They would say that when teaching, he never stuck to his text. The best you could do was quietly to watch and listen, remember and apply. After all, that was what he wanted men to do — to learn to teach themselves.

There are men, very distinguished men, who are much more easily described than John Stuart Blackie.

What he said of the portrait painter is equally true of the portrait writer. I might borrow his own phrase and say that there was the preacher, there was the teacher, the patriot, the man of merry soul; and there was the Blackie of odd moments who was all these in one, as I saw him, with straw hat, blue dressing-robe, and trailing red sash. If I picture him as I saw him then, going about the house in his queer gear and genially nicknaming great folk in the intervals of snatches of song, you are not to think of him as merely an eccentric and entertaining old gentleman. He was very much at his ease, and he made me feel happily so. He was natural man without a pose, without an affectation. He never posed. He did not care what others thought or said about him, what he cared for was what they thought and said about his subject, whatever that might be — country, or religion, or song — and it all led to manliness. "Be a man! Be God's man!" That was the burden of his teaching, preaching, writing, scholarship, philosophy, religion. He wrought great things for the manhood of Scotland.

I remember his coming to Glasgow one night while I visited there. He lectured for some society of young men. His theme was Love. When he had finished, a minister jumped up and shouted this invitation:

"Put that into a sermon, sir, and come and preach it to us next Sabbath. A guinea and a bed!"

"What?" roared Blackie. "D' ye think I 'd preach the Gospel for money? I 'll preach it for nothing if ye 'll come and listen!"

Sometimes they said he was a droll person who went about Scotland cracking jokes. And I have heard them say that he "played too much to the gallery." But the men who said those things liked their sermons delivered by long-faced folk, and wanted their lectures peppered with piety. They had their suspicions of laughter. Blackie bubbled over with good spirits. Others might make the public sigh and weep; he knew that it is better to make them laugh; that if you make them "feel good" they will like you well enough to listen to what you have to say and think about it. As for "playing to the gallery" one has only to recall Blackie's life-long admonitions to Democracy in order to see the error of that assumption.

The best word-picture of John Stuart Blackie was unknown to the public at the time of which I write. It was unknown even to Blackie himself at that time. It was written by one of his pupils, Robert W. Barbour, a brilliant and scholarly man. His "Letters, Poems, and Pensées" appeared subsequently in a volume edited by Professor Drummond, a memorial volume circulated privately. It was with Professor Drummond's permission that I published, years ago, an extract from one of Barbour's letters. Barbour, when it was written, was in charge of a school somewhere in the Highlands. One day his old master, Blackie, came up from Edinburgh for a blow of the mountain air and a visit to Barbour, who thus described the occasion:

"Then follow minutes of Elysium, were life only the Academy, and the world made for students and

Professors! I hear Professor Blackie talk of foreign travel, of the pictures it gives to hang forever in one's after-study; and as the brave old snowy head falls back against the claret of the sofa, he brings me out, one by one, the pictures — Rome, Florence, Milan, Göttingen — latest hung therein.

"After dinner the Professor and I have an hour and a half's stroll to the school, while I drink in the delightful desultoriness of his talk, and try to stop just when he does — which is not always easy; for you cannot tell why this crystus should seize his fancy, or that 'potentilla' interrupt his thought. But it only breaks to flower forth again more beautiful, as he talks first of Italy, its grace we lack so in Scotland, its lack of sternness we could so well supply; its few great hearts alive and active, its multitudes asleep and slow; then of its new literature; then the political parties; then what poets should do now, not to be so sundered from their time as Browning (who walked these roads), nor so bound to the mere accident of rhyme. Let poets write short, sympathetic lives of men; let them write history, not stories.

"And so we come to the school where the Professor has half an hour of cross-questioning the best scholar, to the advantage of the whole school; and such happy definitions, and such funny 'pokes' with the mind and the walking-stick, and such instructive similes and amusing information. They are rather annoyed when I tell them how great a man my master is. Then they sing to him in good Scotch to his heart's desire. . . .

"At last he rises, and asking them something in a Gaelic too good, or bad, or both (or rather book-born), to be understanded of them, he breaks into a beautiful Gaelic lament, while the whole little audience stands open-mouthed, eyed, and eared, and hardly recovers to whisper 'Good-bye, sir', ere he and I are out into the air again.

"I apologise for having given him such little work for so long, and he hums out something in German, which he breaks half sternly to say: 'There are four things a man must love — children, flowers, woman,' and, must I say it? 'wine.' He went on to tell me how hateful and horrible a nature Napoleon's always had seemed to him. Napoleon said: 'I love nothing, I love not woman, I love not dice, I love not wine, I love not politics.'

"Then the hill came, and with the hill our thoughts could not help climbing. Was I licensed? No, not ordained yet, of course. Would I preach the splendid possibilities in man, to sink to the beasts which perish, or to rise to heaven itself? He did not deny that the heart was deceitful and desperately wicked, but should we not call on men to realise for what they were made. . . . No man understands others, he said, who does not leave himself more behind, and go and sit by others, wherever they may be.

"He could not say what Greek one should read who had few books and less time. 'No, read only where the heart runs; read nothing except that about which you are passionate . . .' So I got no lists of authors or works. 'Read where you are

thinking; don't read where you are not feeling.' This and much more on war, churches, architecture, youth and new opinions in theology, and materialism (he had read some of the latter; he could n't for the life of him remember it) and philosophy.

"He talked," continues Barbour, "and I treasured up. But most on the three tongues, and what was work for poets. Then came afternoon tea and raillery between him and my mother. Then they packed into the pony phaeton — my professor a perfect picture, his broad leghorn bright with a flower, scarlet of seedum fringed by golden yew, and the ladies a good background."

So you see, it was the same John Stuart Blackie years and years before. "Do stay to tea, man!" he urged, when I said I must be going, that there would be just time to catch such-and-such a train for Glasgow where an appointment was to be kept.

"Ah, then punctuality 's the word. Be late and be nothing." He came down to the front door with me, his leghorn flapping, his sash-ends trailing on the stairs. There were volcanic salutations to portraits which we had missed when going up. I said good-bye to the Grand Old Man of Scotland.

"Good-bye," said he, "and dinna forget — Aristotle, Shakespeare, Goethe, and the Apostle Paul — my heroes!"

In the gathering dusk I descended the steps, as he stood in the open doorway, singing, and gazing towards the Corstorphine Hill.

CHAPTER VIII

LORD KELVIN

He sat on the lower stair, near the front door of his house, making difficult calculations and strange diagrams in a little book bound in green morocco. It would be five minutes before the carriage started, and he recollected that fact just as he reached the door and had put on his overcoat. Another man, almost any other, would have idled while the five minutes passed, and most men, especially busy men, would have fussed nervously at having to wait when they were ready. But Lord Kelvin, being the busiest of men, never wasted time by fussing, and never lost it in idling. Having five minutes he would solve a problem, so he pulled the memorandum book from his coat pocket, where he always carried it, and sat on the stair and worked.

He was seventy then, but his spirits were as young as those of the youngest of his students. They say that a man is as old as his arteries. The saying might have originated with him, if it ever occurred to him that he had arteries. But I am not sure that the customary anatomy was not, in his case, reinforced by an ingenious system of electrical conductors through which a mysterious energy was driven by

his dynamic mind. Like all great teachers he was ever learning. But it would be difficult to say when he began to learn, for he was only ten years old when he entered the university! And he was thoroughly equipped for entering upon his student work even at that age. At twenty-two he was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy, and he held that professorship for the rest of his life!

Lord Kelvin was the greatest master of natural science in the nineteenth century. The twentieth century has not, thus far, produced his superior. He was born in 1824, he died in 1908. It was my privilege to know him during the last fifteen years of his life. A kinder man, one more considerate of the abysmal ignorance of the fellow creatures with whom he came into contact, could not be imagined. He was a plain Scotsman without a pose, without even a Scottish pose, and it would be difficult, maybe impossible, to find a better embodiment of life than that. Scottish he was, though born in Ireland. And his fame was associated with that of Glasgow University which had the honour of receiving him into student life and which received the greater honour of his distinguished services for a period almost as long as the psalmist allots to the life of a man.

When he was eighty-three he outlined, as, probably, he had often outlined before, the plan of a boy's education. "By the age of twelve," said he, "a boy should have learned to write his own language with accuracy and some elegance; he should have a reading knowledge of French, should be able to

translate Latin and easy Greek authors, and should have some acquaintance with German. Having learned the meaning of words, a boy should study Logic. I never found that the small amount of Greek I learned was a hindrance to my acquiring some knowledge of Natural Philosophy." *Some* knowledge of it! There, indeed, was modesty. For who had more knowledge of natural philosophy, or so much, as Lord Kelvin?

Is it necessary to say that he was not born to baronies? Surely, that much all readers may be presumed to know, some wiseacre will remark. But if one were painting a portrait instead of writing it, nothing would be more futile than to omit the subject's nose on the presumption that the public knew he had one. William Thomson, who became Lord Kelvin, was born in Belfast, the younger of two brothers. The elder brother was James, and he became famous as a professor of engineering. He died, however, some fifteen years before his brother. James was named for his father, and that James, the father, was born on a farm near Ballynahinch, County Down. His Scotch ancestors had planted themselves in Ireland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That farmer's boy had a huge hunger for knowledge. When he was eleven or twelve years old he taught himself, having no teacher to aid him, the principles of the sundial, so that he could make dials for any latitude. Also, from books which he contrived to get, he learned the elements of mathematics. By and by he began teaching in a little school. He taught in the summers, and in

the winters he studied at Glasgow University, continuing to do so for five years, and then he was appointed a teacher in the Royal Academic Institute of Belfast. When his son William had reached the age of eight, the scholarly parent was appointed to the Professorship of Mathematics at Glasgow University, a position he held for twenty years. His scientific attainments were high, and his classical scholarship was distinguished. He educated his sons himself, until each was ten, and then sent each to the university. Lord Kelvin said to me once, when we were talking of those early days: "I had a great father."

The Kelvin is a little stream that winds through the grounds of Glasgow University. When Queen Victoria bestowed a peerage upon Sir William Thomson (she had knighted him many years before that) he chose for his title the name of the little stream by whose side he had spent his fruitful and illustrious life. His had been a life of labour, but it had been congenial labour. He had contributed vastly to the sum of human knowledge; he had invented useful things, to the amazement of pedantic men who think that science should remain with scientific persons and never be applied to the wants of the world; at least, not applied by the scientific discoverer of the principles or things. But with all his theories he was a practical man, and he prospered. That day when he sat on the stair for five minutes, and concentrated the training of sixty years upon the page of a notebook, we went to White's.

Once upon a time there was a White, a James White, who, in Glasgow, made instruments of precision which found their way all over the world. And so he became the maker of various things that Sir William Thomson, afterward Lord Kelvin, had invented. When White died, or retired, or possibly before that, Kelvin acquired his business and establishment and continued the manufacture of instruments of precision, the establishment being conducted under White's name, as before, and as possibly it may be to this day. Anyhow, we went to White's, where Lord Kelvin took me into his laboratory and showed me, among other things, his "Siphon Recorder" which was very interesting, albeit very puzzling to the non-technical mind. I asked him what it did. The technical descriptions I had read were rather baffling. His answer was: "The electric current in an under-sea cable, say an Atlantic cable, is very weak and weary. This reaches out from the shore, and helps it along, and writes down what it says." It was for this invention that he was knighted in 1866. He had connected the hemispheres.

He was one of the courageous and hopeful band that laid and worked the first Atlantic cables. Submarine telegraphy had been first employed in 1850 when a line was laid across the English Channel between Dover and Calais. But the scientific camps were divided in opinion about the practicability of working across thousands of miles of ocean-bed. One faction declared it "beyond the resources of human skill." Robert Stephenson said the project could end only in failure. Of course, the

moneyed men were timid. Most of them were more than timid; they were scared. Faraday had found that the transmission of signals by submarine cable, on a line from Harwich to Holland, was not instantaneous. "The line leaked," said the financial men, "and most of the electricity that was pumped into it spilled into the sea. This does not occur on land lines," they said; "we will not invest."

William Thomson discovered and formulated "the law which governs the retardation of electrical signals in submarine lines." Whitehouse found that with a line 1125 miles long, a signal required a second and a half for transmission. Thomson's law showed that on a line long enough to connect Ireland with Newfoundland the transmission of a signal would require six seconds. This meant a dismally limited service. Only a few words could be cabled in an hour. The croakers were pleased. The men whose habit it is to say "I told you so" were joyous. The financiers would use their capital for other purposes. But Cyrus Field of New York found the money, and William Thomson found the way to utilize his own law to make success out of what had seemed to others to be defeat. He invented the "Siphon Recorder." Then the cable was laid under the Atlantic, and on August 17, 1858, Thomson's instruments sent and received this message:

"Europe and America are united by telegraph. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward men."

Two weeks later the cable broke. The world jeered and lost faith, according to its habit. Some

called the cable undertaking "a swindle", some "a hoax", some a silly toy. These were thoughtful critics. Eight years passed, eight years of effort to make and submerge a cable that would endure. In 1866 the difficulties were overcome. The world congratulated itself and the men who had worked the "miracle." Lord Kelvin told me the story as if it had been a little affair of the day before. "There has been so much to think of since then," said he, "and there is so much more to be done! Harnessing Niagara is one thing." The men who plan things and do them were already planning for that, and as in the cable project, they called in Lord Kelvin to help.

"How far can we transmit electricity for power and lighting purposes?" they asked.

"Three hundred miles," said he.

They laid their plans for a much shorter distance, within a hundred miles, and they thought that Kelvin was dreaming. Years later, when power and lighting current had been successfully conveyed over much greater distances than Kelvin had suggested, an acquaintance of mine asked him: "Why did n't you tell us that electric power can be conducted over these greater distances? I thought three hundred miles was the limit."

"The limit is not known," replied Lord Kelvin. "In the case you refer to, I answered a specific question regarding a specific plan undertaken for commercial purposes. The limit was improved by time and circumstance, not by Nature. Ten years ago we could not build the machinery that is built

to-day, nor, on a great scale, employ the conductors that are used to-day. My suggestion concerned the means then known, not the means that might be developed in a decade."

"Well, I lost a chance," said the would-be investor, who was also a Scot.

"So, I imagine, did the capitalists of Archimedes' day. You will remember that they failed to provide him with a fulcrum," said Lord Kelvin dryly.

Lord Kelvin, when a young man, became permanently lame as the result of a skating accident, but his lameness did not retard his physical activity. Sir William Ramsay, the celebrated chemist who had been a pupil of Kelvin, said that it "lent emphasis to his amusing class demonstration of 'uniform velocity' when he, Kelvin, marched back and forth behind his lecture-bench with as even a movement as his lameness would permit; and the class generally burst into enthusiastic applause when he altered his pace, and introduced them to the meaning of the word 'acceleration.'"

Ramsay's opinion was that Kelvin "was not what would be called a good lecturer; he was too discursive." Ramsay doubted whether any man "with a brain so much above the ordinary, so much more rapid in action than the average, can be a first-rate teacher. . . . But Kelvin never allowed the interest of his students to flag. His aptness in illustration and his vigour of language prevented that. Lecturing one day on 'Couples', he explained how forces must be applied to constitute a Couple and illustrated the direction of the forces by turning around the

gas-bracket. This led to a discussion on the miserable quality of Glasgow coal-gas and how it might be improved. Following again the main idea, he caught hold of the door and swung it to and fro; but again his mind diverged to the difference in the structure of English and Scottish doors. We never forgot what a 'Couple' was — but the idea might have been conveyed more succinctly." Yes, and ten to one the receivers of it would have forgotten what a "Couple" was!

I heard Kelvin address the Royal Society in London while he was president of that body. He had invited me to come, and I was curious enough to see the most distinguished scientific body in the world learning something from the world's most distinguished mathematician, electrician, and natural philosopher. The hall in Burlington House was filled. Had an earthquake swallowed the hall then, the world would have been deprived instantaneously of dozens of men who were doing its thinking for it. The subject of the discourse was not thrilling, nor could the lecturer have been accused of an attempt to pander to popularity. The subject was "The Homogeneous Division of Space." There shot through the hour's talk a stream of descriptive phrases such as "tetrakaidekahedronal cells", "parallelepipedal partitionings", "enantiomorphs", and their progeny.

The genial old gentleman on the platform would rest his weight upon his hands on the table, or the lecture-desk, and lean forward towards his audience, and tell some puzzling facts about nature's puzzles,

pouring streams of numbers and their multiplications and divisions into their ears while they floundered in the mathematical deluge. He would see that he had them puzzled, that his mind was working too fast for them; he must have surmised it from the expressions on their faces, for while he announced theories, discoveries, and drew conclusions, they, with all their knowledge and experience, would look as blank or bewildered as schoolboys, and he would step back from the table and, with a winning smile, remark, "It 's this way", or "After all, it 's simpler than it seems", or "I think it would be demonstrated so", and turning swiftly on one heel would face the blackboard and draw upon it in strokes that were like flashes, a diagram which made it all so clear that his hearers chuckled, or laughed outright; then swiftly he would turn again and face them with that winning smile which seemed to mean, "See how simple it is!" Then they would applaud him, which is very difficult for the Royal Society to do.

Lord Kelvin's was the first house in the world to be lighted by electricity throughout. He utilized the current in every nook and corner, in attics and cellars, in cupboards, closets and wardrobes, long before anybody else had attempted to do so. This was when everybody else thought electric lighting a luxury, but his purpose was to prove it a necessity. That was his way. Whenever he acquired new knowledge he applied it forthwith to the betterment of the human lot. He thought that science for the sake of science, or scientists, was as stupid a formula as "art for art's sake." Cheese for cheese's sake

would be quite as useful to mankind. Of what use was knowledge if it were not applied to the needs of man?

He was a yachtsman, but not for sporting purposes, or faddishness, or luxurious idleness. He loved the sea, and his yacht, a schooner named *Lalla Rookh*, enabled him to wrest from the sea some of its secrets. For twenty years he went sailing every summer, living aboard weeks at a time. He held the certificate of a master navigator. It was on board the *Lalla Rookh* that he invented his famous apparatus for taking soundings and his no less famous compass. These things became necessities for navigators.

The first pair of telephonic instruments that Alexander Graham Bell brought to Europe were presented by him to Lord Kelvin, who immediately put them to use by connecting his house with that of his brother-in-law and assistant, Doctor J. T. Bottomley. The first electrically lighted house in the world was the first in the old world to be connected by telephone for purposes professional, social, personal, and domestic. For how could Kelvin, who was always peering into the future, be afraid of new things? He peered into the past, too, for you remember how he startled the orthodox mind by his calculations regarding the age of the earth.

Lord Salisbury, just before he became Prime Minister for the last time (his long term of 1895–1902) was Chancellor of the University of Oxford and at the same time President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. At Ox-

ford, in a memorable year, and in behalf of the University of which he was chancellor, he welcomed the association of which he was president, and he reminded his learned listeners that Lord Kelvin, whom he alluded to as "the greatest living master of natural science amongst us", was the first to point out that the amount of time required by the advocates of the Darwinian theory for the working out of the process of evolution which they had imagined "could not be conceded without assuming the existence of a totally different set of natural laws from those with which we are acquainted." Hot things cool. The once seething earth has cooled and is cooling. So many million years ago it must have been hotter than now by calculable degrees. "But if at any time it was hotter at the surface by fifty degrees Fahrenheit than it is now, life would then have been impossible on this planet."

Lord Kelvin assured us that organic life on earth cannot have existed more than a hundred million years ago. So if you believed in Archbishop Ussher's chronology, and niggardly dealt out to the earth an age of only six thousand years, or went so far as Professor Tait with his ten million, you had, by Kelvin's figuring, a tremendous margin to fill up somehow. Of course the orthodox jumped and squealed. But the geologists and biologists stamped and yelled. Some of them wanted more than Kelvin's stingy allowance; they wanted not one hundred million years, but hundreds of millions. And there was a pretty ferment in the camps!

Sir William Ramsay I have quoted on Kelvin's

illustration, in the class room, of the term "acceleration." Kelvin maintained speed when he had got it up. Remember that he was lame, and consider his energy. He would dart at an object that stood a few feet from him, on his lecture-bench, use it for whatever demonstration was required, and then dart at another, or at the blackboard, or at the pointer, as if he were a busy bee extracting honey from the flowers. There was certainty about everything he did; no hesitation, no floundering, no hemming and hawing for a word, or the next act. His lameness merely lent emphasis to the fact that he was walking; it did not prevent his swiftness of movement. Across the grounds of the university I toiled after him like "panting time." He gave the impression of readiness for a race, and might challenge you at any minute. His gown was always streaming behind him, his mortar-board cap in imminent danger of blowing off in the breeze stirred by his advance. Well, he had raced the world many years and had always won.

Some great men are so impressed by their own greatness that their manner becomes ponderous and vast as if they lived in a belief that they cast shadows on the sun. Not so Lord Kelvin, who never seemed to think that great men thought him a greater than themselves. His manner was simple, gentle, courteous, and direct. He was easy to talk with, and yet he had no small talk. But it was not easy to answer his questions. There was never such a man as he for asking questions unless it were the Chinese Viceroy, Li Hung Chang. Whatever your profession,

trade, interests in life, he would put questions that went to the roots of your matter and revealed on his part a greater knowledge of the problems involved than you dreamed existed. By tireless questioning he learned. But where Li Hung Chang turned the results of his questioning to his own benefit, Kelvin applied them to the good of the world. Yet when, in 1896, they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his professorship at Glasgow he was, I take it, the most surprised man in all the galaxy of the famous. The dear old gentleman with the domed head, the white hair, and generous white beard seemed to be asking himself, "What next? Why all this fuss and feathers?" But he was apparently genuinely pleased, too, for all the tributes bespoke honest admiration of achievement and character. Fifty-one learned societies, twelve colleges, and twenty-eight universities were represented. They were of all countries. That day the world, and all that was therein, lifted its hat to Lord Kelvin.

I may slip in here a quotation from Emerson. "In Newton," said Emerson, "science was as easy as breathing; he used the same wit to weigh the moon that he used to buckle his shoes; and all his life was simple, wise, and majestic. So it was in Archimedes — always self-same, like the sky. In Linnæus, in Franklin, the like sweetness and equality — no stilts, no tiptoe; and their results are wholesome and memorable to all men."

What Lord Kelvin had done, and was still to do, could not be described by any writing of less than encyclopædic scope, and a knowledge as wide and

deep as his own. Helmholtz may be quoted, as he has been quoted by many who attempted the larger task from a scientific standpoint. Helmholtz was his intimate friend. Helmholtz said: "He is an eminent mathematician, but the gift to translate real facts into mathematical equations, and *vice versa*, is, by far, more rare than to find a solution of a given mathematical problem, and in this direction he is most eminent and original."

Kelvin's first published paper was a defence of the mathematician, Fourier. His second was on "The Uniform Motion of Heat in Homogeneous Solid Bodies, and Its Connection With The Mathematical Theory of Electricity." I think he was eighteen then. He was certainly showing the bent of his mind. Fifty or sixty years later he said, in a presidential address to the Royal Society: "Tribulation, not undisturbed progress, gives life and soul, and leads to success where success can be reached." I do not know what his tribulations were, but they may have been the tribulations of defeat. He may have faced many defeats, but he won more successes. And the world was more concerned with scientific discoveries during his career than it had been in the time of Count Rumford and Humphry Davy, whose work in disproving that heat is a material body had been forgotten because nobody seemed to think it more important than curious. Sometime in the eighteen-forties James Prescott Joule ascertained the dynamical equivalent of heat, and settled the fact that heat is a mode of motion. Kelvin may be said to have leaped to the side of his friend.

Lord Kelvin was the first to appreciate the importance of Joule's discovery, and it was not long before he placed the whole subject of thermodynamics on a scientific basis. He put his conclusions into these easily understandable words: "During any transformation of energy of one form into energy of another form, there is always a certain amount of energy rendered unavailable for further useful application. No known process in nature is exactly reversible: that is to say, there is no known process by which we can convert a given amount of energy of one form into energy of another form, and then, reversing the process, reconvert the energy of the second form thus obtained into the original quantity of energy of the first form. In fact, during any transformation of energy from one form into another, there is always a certain portion of energy changed into heat in the process of conversion, and the heat thus produced becomes dissipated and diffused by radiation and conduction. Consequently there is a tendency in nature for all the energy in the universe, of whatever kind it be, gradually to assume the form of heat, and having done so to become equally diffused. Now, were all the energy of the universe converted into uniformly diffused heat, it would cease to be available for producing mechanical effort, since, for that purpose, we must have a hot source and a cooler condenser. This gradual degradation of energy is perpetually going on, and, sooner or later, unless there be some restorative power of which we have, at present, no knowledge whatever, the present state of things must come to an end."

He revealed the Electrodynamics of Qualities of Metals; the size of atoms, the horse-power of the sun; he determined the rigidity of the earth, the laws of the tides, made far-reaching discoveries in electricity, in vortex motion; it might be said of him that he took the universe for his field.

But in a chapter like this one is tempted to dwell too long on high achievements. What attracted one more than the achievements was the man, the kindly, sympathetic man who loved truth not celebrity, and work more than its rewards. He was ever the same, whether one met him in Glasgow, London, at sea, or in America, the same simple, straightforward, kindly character. He retained his mental activity to the end. He died at eighty-four, and seemed only to be departing on another journey in quest of truth and friendship.

On one of the afternoons when I sat with him in his study, within the precincts of the university, he said, "Patience, great patience is the need of this generation. It asks results before it earns them. Man is too wasteful of the resources he finds in the earth. The most of our coal is lost in smoke; the most of our heat is dissipated in the air. We need patience not less than courage in dealing with our problems." The study was lined with engravings and photographs. Darwin and Joule and Faraday looked down from the walls, and there were pictures of the cable-laying ships, the *Hooper*, and the *Great Eastern*. There were trophies of travel, — from specimens of sea-bottom along the African coast, to quite personal mementos of his lectures at

Johns Hopkins University and other places in America.

A typical day of Lord Kelvin's was, in outline, this: After breakfast he would, at nine, face his class in the university and lecture for an hour. I heard him in such an hour lecture on "Kepler's Laws." He lectured to his class three days a week. After the lecture he would go to White's where he was perfecting an electric metre. After White's he would return to the university and lecture until one o'clock, say, on the "Higher Mathematics." Then home to lunch. After lunch consulting work on the lighting of a town by electricity. After that an hour in Lady Kelvin's drawing-room, taking tea with friends. Then work in the study over the laws governing the formation of crystals. Then dinner. Then calculations in the study, or writing a paper for one of the numerous societies of which he was a working member. In the intervals, with his secretary's aid, he would attend to his correspondence. And, if waiting for his secretary, out of a coat pocket would come the little green book, and into it would go notes, calculations, or diagrams, perhaps all three. That little green book would come out whenever he had a minute to spare, in his dressing-room, or on the stairs, or in a train, or a cab, wherever he happened to be, and the thought flashed. I often wondered what his thoughts were on the conservation of personal energy.

CHAPTER IX

TENNYSON

FRESHWATER is an overgrown village which sprawls about the western end of the lovely Isle of Wight. The meanness of much of its masonry is compensated by its remarkably wholesome air. Man has done his best to spoil Freshwater, but he has not wholly succeeded — yet. Give him time, and more radicalism, and he will make it one of the ugly spots of earth. I made its acquaintance in the early spring of 1882, and subsequently have visited it many times.

When I first made acquaintance with Freshwater, there was no railway within eleven miles, Newport being the terminus of the island lines which were as drolly inconvenient as they are now. The fiddling, amateurish railway, which has come in since then, has not only robbed Freshwater of its seclusion but has saddled parts of the rolling country with shabby streets of mean houses worthy of a Montana mining town. Towards the downs and the sea much of the old charm remains. About Farringford it is undisturbed. And it was at Farringford, that lovely estate, that Tennyson lived.

I had quarters in a house that faced the sea. And these quarters were mine whenever, in the

thirty-six years since that delightful May, I returned to Freshwater. They are mine no longer. The house has become an hotel. Now, in the thirty-eighth year of my Freshwatering, I have lodgment elsewhere. The house that sheltered me so long is scarcely a quarter of a mile from Tennyson's Lane, and many of the poet's friends have stayed in it, and friends of Watts, for that great artist also lived in Freshwater, first at a house which is now called Dimbola, and subsequently at "The Briary", a charming home built by the Prinseps and facing Tennyson's "noble Down." In the rooms to which I have so often retreated, and where I so often watched the blue Channel dancing in the sunshine, there are, or were, many mementos of past days. Some of them were photographs, and, as any one who knows the Freshwater legends may guess, they were taken by Mrs. Cameron, the first of the artist photographers, and, in her day, the celebrator of all the celebrated who came to Freshwater to visit the poet.

Mrs. Cameron lived at Dimbola which is at the southeastern corner of the Farringford estate. "She were a concentric lady who wore velvet gowns a-trailin' in the dusty roads," as one old-timer described her to me. Her photography was not professional but amateur, and her skill in it was quite remarkable. So was her persistence. She would not permit a possible "subject" to escape without "taking" him or her. She was quite intimate with the Tennysons, and always called the poet by his Christian name. One day, while there was a smallpox scare about, she rushed to Farring-

ford, with a stranger in tow, and finding Tennyson within, she opened the door of the room where he was sitting, and bidding the stranger follow, cried, "Alfred, I 've brought a doctor to vaccinate you. You must be vaccinated!"

Tennyson, horrified, fled to an adjoining room and bolted the door after him.

"Alfred, Alfred," Mrs. Cameron called, "I 've brought a doctor. You must be vaccinated; you really must!"

There was no reply.

"Oh, Alfred, you 're a coward! Come and be vaccinated!"

She won.

When Garibaldi visited Tennyson, he planted a tree in the Farringford grounds. And Mrs. Cameron planted herself before him, and begged him to come and be photographed. Rather eccentric, as my old-timer had tried to convey, she had that morning hastened to Farringford without hat, or gloves, and with her sleeves rolled up, just as she came from her "dark room", and her hands were stained with photographic chemicals. Garibaldi seems to have taken her for a beggar and was turning away, when she knelt before him and implored him to let her photograph him.

Again she won. She always won in such contests.

Mrs. Cameron's day was before the days of dry plates and films. The accumulation of negatives that she left when, with her husband, she returned to Ceylon, where they had formerly lived for many years, passed into the possession of a son. I do not

know what has been their subsequent fate; but if uninjured they would be very interesting now, and a collection of prints from them would have a value all its own. She made a number, I daresay many photographs of Tennyson and the members of his family; and when Longfellow came to Farringford, the good lady triumphantly proclaimed him a captive.

She was a kind-hearted, good-natured soul, but when she wanted to carry a point she could be as imperious and decisive as any one that ever lived in the Isle. The neighbourhood children she would persuade by "sweeties", or, failing these, by main force, to "come and be photographed" in this character or that, and there were maid servants with classic faces and ploughmen with fine heads who posed for her as characters in plays and poems, in costumes which she would improvise. Mrs. Cameron was a generous, interesting, impulsive woman. Much of Freshwater legend gathers about her, and her camera, and her diligence in amateur theatricals.

In my island study there hung for many years the two best photographs of Tennyson that I ever saw. They were taken by Mrs. Cameron. The first was, I believe, taken about 1870, or '72. It represents the poet seated, and holding with both hands a book half opened in his lap. He wears a black morning coat, closely buttoned, cut in the fashion of the time. Instead of the big rolling collar usually shown in his portraits, here is the stiff "dickey" of Piccadilly; the cuffs, too, are in the mode, and over the coat a

monocle hangs. It is quite out of the style of other Tennyson portraits with which I am reasonably familiar, but on that account it has a special interest of its own. The second photograph, to which I have alluded, is not only thoroughly characteristic but has achieved some fame as "The Dirty Monk", and is thus autographed by its original:

"I prefer 'The Dirty Monk'
to the others of me.
A. Tennyson.
Except one by Mayall."

When I returned to Freshwater for three or four months in 1913, after several years' absence, I looked, as usual, for this precious pair. But they had gone, and no one could tell, or would tell, when or where. Some souvenir hunter must have loved them too well.

There are, or were, some Morland prints, too. George Morland lived and painted in Freshwater, in a bit cottage that stood in front of the site of this house, but which disappeared nearly a century ago. Mrs. Cameron, could she revisit the glimpses of the moon, would find her quiet old village developed into a sprawling, country town. It had five hundred inhabitants when Tennyson first came to it in a sailboat from the mainland, in 1852, or 1853; it has between five and ten thousand now, west of the Yar. The number shifts with the summer visitors, and the military cannot be counted, for they come and go in a variable stream. Ever since the war began, the fit and the wounded, the trained and the un-

trained have passed through in large numbers, or have stayed for longer or shorter terms. A war town has grown up on a border of the old town. Golden Hill is now an expanse of barrack huts and not of yellow gorse.

Mrs. Cameron believed in getting things done, not in talking about them. She transformed the coal shed at Dimbola into a dark room for developing her negatives; and the poultry house became a studio. When her husband, a recluse who had n't so much as seen the beach for a dozen years, wanted a lawn, she had turf dug by night and laid in the garden. Calling her husband to the window next morning, she pointed to the expanse of new-laid turf and said, "There 's your lawn!" as if any one would deny her power to work miracles.

Farringford, of course, is enclosed by hedges and trees, literally surrounded by them. The house itself is still further protected from the gaze of the outer world by an inner circle of trees and shrubbery. The estate is bisected by the lovely lane which has been described in every account ever written of Tennyson, and photographed a thousand times. It, in turn, has a hedgerow on each side and is overarched by elms. It is really an approach to the farm which is attached to the home acres, and through it, for walking purposes, the public has a right-of-way. At the crest of the rising ground is a little green door, set in the high-banked hedge which guards the home lawns, and by this green door the poet would pass to the down along another lane which runs at right angles to the one associated with his

name and immediately opposite the green door. A few feet beyond this, a rustic bridge overhead spans Tennyson's Lane, and by this bridge the poet could cross into a woodland without having to enter the Lane, where his privacy might be disturbed, and so walk to Maiden's Croft, where a little green summerhouse stands under the trees and where he often wrote and meditated. From this summerhouse he had the best view of the beautiful and noble down. From the windows of Farringford there are exquisite views of seascape and landscape, with lush fields in the foreground, — a view, on sunny days, of quite un-English colour. In the distance St. Catherine's Point and above it the white crown of the Landslip, and above that the dark shape of St. Boniface Down, lifting its head eight hundred feet toward the clouds; in the middle distance a tumble of green hills, and to the right the sea dappled with shafts of light and colour ever changing, — mauves and blues and greens, splashed with browns and reds, shifting and playing there under the sun. It might be Italian sea and Italian landscape. And Tennyson called it his "bit of Italy." You can see it just as he saw it, if you pause at an iron gate on your left, near the top of the rise in the Lane, and you will have in the foreground a group of Italian-like trees beyond which Stag Rock and Arched Rock stand with their feet in the tiny bay. It is of all bits of English land and water one of the most memorable for form and colour, — this little Italy. And it drew Tennyson to Farringford and held him there.

Tennyson was not seen much in the village, but he often walked to the bay. Here is my first glimpse of him: a tall man looking like a cloaked brigand; his head was swallowed by a great hat, soft and black, and he was pointing with a stick.

"Making yourself at home here, are n't you?" he was understood to say in something between a rumble and growl.

An artist friend of mine was seated on a sketching stool at the iron gate, making a study of the "bit of Italy." Before the stool was an easel, a palette, and a box of water colours. Tennyson, who was near-sighted, saw at first only the seated figure on the camp stool, leaning back against the open gate and gazing at the unique view.

"Very much at home," continued the poet.

The right-of-way was for walking only, not for sitting in chairs and encumbering the earth with easels and general impedimenta of the fine arts. My friend, who was a stranger in the land, had probably not thought of this, and, having a sudden consciousness of intrusion, whispered to me, around the hedge:

"Tennyson! O Lord!"

The great man drew nearer, and then, taking in the situation, said:

"Ah, painting! Brothers in art. Good morning!"

This was perhaps tender treatment as compared with what we had heard a pair of strangers might have expected. But my friend, although flurried because Jove had passed, remained at work. I forget, though, whether the sketch was ever completed.

I was curious enough, however, to pass on, by a detour, in the hope of seeing Jove on his homeward stroll. But he had vanished, and there were no thunderings, near or far.

Mrs. Cameron and her household, after years at enlivening and photographing Freshwater, returned to Ceylon. The departure was an occasion for a liberal distribution of photographs among the inhabitants of the West Wight; and where there was a souvenir to be given or a tip to be left, mounted portraits of celebrities, or of models dressed as characters in fiction or poetry, were handed out. Thus it happened that many of the pleasant lodging-houses in the vicinity became galleries of Cameron art.

"Ideal" Ward had built a country mansion within a mile of Farringford. It was called Weston Manor. The eminent Catholic scholar and writer was, of course, a friend of Tennyson. And the two would dispute, of course, about religion, or, rather, about theology, without the slightest effect upon each other's opinions. The house is still in the possession of the Ward family, but is not occupied by them. For some years the private chaplain at Weston Manor was Father Peter Haythornthwaite, a most agreeable and hard-working man. Father Peter, as they called him in the island, was also a friend of Tennyson and frequently a companion of his walks. He told me an amusing story connected with his first dinner at Farringford. Tennyson had an Irish maid, Mary by name. The family were very fond of her; her devotion to them was equalled only by her zeal in serving them, which she would

sometimes do in a domineering, if loyal manner, to which the poet bowed submissively. Tennyson disliked formality and stiffness, and was uncomfortable in a dress suit and starched shirt. Dressing for dinner he avoided whenever he could. Mary had laid out his most ceremonious clothes.

"Put them away," said he. "I 'll not wear them!"

Mary insisted.

"Now, I see," said Tennyson. "I am to wear them for that priest, eh?"

"Plaze, sir!"

"Will he come in his altar robes and stole?"

"The saints forbid!" said she.

"If they forbid him, why should they compel me?" he asked.

"It 's I, yer Honour, that tell ye, for the sake of the house! And he 's a man of God."

"I could n't resist that, could I?" the poet asked of Father Peter. "And so," said he, "I dressed."

At the table one evening, Tennyson, being in a humorous mood, composed rhyming epitaphs upon every name that occurred to him.

"What would you say of me?" asked Father Peter.

Instantly this couplet rolled from the lips of the host:

"Here lies P. Haythornthwaite,
Human by nature, Roman by fate."

A letter of Mrs. Cameron's came under my observation one day, and I was permitted to make a note from it. "Tennyson," she wrote, "was very violent with the girls on the subject of the rage for

autographs. He said he believed every crime and every vice in the world was connected with the passion for autographs and anecdotes and records; that the desiring of anecdotes and acquaintance with the lives of great men was treating them like pigs to be ripped open for the public; and that he knew he himself should be ripped open like a pig; that he thanked God Almighty with his whole heart and soul that he knew nothing, and would know nothing, of Jane Austen; and that there were no letters preserved, either of Shakespeare's, or of Jane Austen's; and that they had not been ripped open like pigs. Then he said that the post for two days had brought him no letters, and that he thought there was a sort of syncope in the world as to him and his fame."

That last touch is delicious. Tennyson did not like to be ignored. He was proud, and justly proud, of his fame. Sir Edwin Arnold said: "Tennyson had a noble vanity, a proud pleasure in the very notoriety which brought strangers peeping and stealing about his gates." Perhaps so, but it was a case of "It needs be that offences come, but woe be to him through whom the offence cometh." He hated to have tributes thrust upon him; he hated intrusions upon his privacy, and had suffered too much from that sort of thing at Farringford when summer visitors overran Freshwater. He liked to be recognised along the country roads; he liked to have people lift their hats to him; he liked to know that his work meant something to the passer by. But he shunned the merely curious stranger.

And so it was natural enough that he should have built a summer home on the mainland, Aldworth, where there was no summer resort and no plague of the curious. His friend, James Knowles, of the *Nineteenth Century*, designed the house, and there Tennyson passed many happy summers and autumns. And there, on a moonlit night in the autumn of 1892, he died. Whether he loved Farringford more, or Aldworth more, I do not know. But probably he was as much attached to one as to the other, for each had its special associations.

The Tennysonian cloak, the Tennysonian hat, the rolling collar, and the touzled beard and hair were not unique. There lived at one time in Freshwater a brother of the poet. He resembled the poet and dressed like him. At the same time there was another resident of the place who not only resembled Lord Tennyson but "got himself up" in close imitation of his dress and manner. He was a warm admirer of Tennyson, and was immensely flattered to be mistaken for him by strangers. Small boys of the neighbourhood learned speedily to extract penny tips from this adoring person by pretending to mistake him for their celebrated townsman. On the whole it was rather a good thing to have three figures in the place, any one of which might be looked upon or followed by the summer visitor as the famous poet. It might be puzzling if the stranger met two or three Tennysons in a mile, but two of them could easily divert attention from the third, who was skilled in avoiding strangers.

There was an aged man who had been a gardener

at Farringford and was living on a little pension from that quarter. One morning he heard that the Poet Laureate had died. Meeting Father Peter in the road he expressed his grief that "his pore ludship have passed away." Then, with much concern for the succession, he asked:

"D' ye think likely Mr. Hallam will follow his father's business?"

Father Peter thought it quite unlikely.

"Ah," said the pensioner, much relieved. "I think nowt on 't, nowt!"

I have seen Farringford described as "a beautifully wooded gentleman's park." It must, at least, be acknowledged that if the gentleman were not beautifully wooded, he lived there, and that he lived a beautiful and serene life, a noble life, adding greatly to the fame of England, and no less to the human lot. Forty of his eighty-three years were Farringford years. Never was poet more happily placed than in this earthly paradise. Every circumstance of loyalty and love, of understanding and devotion, surrounded him here and at Aldworth. And never had genius a more devoted aid than Tennyson had in his son Hallam, the present Lord Tennyson, shield and buckler to his father and to his gentle mother, the dear lady who seemed like a spirit held on earth only by the devotion of husband and son. A family life richer and more tender one does not know among all the lives that one has seen, or ever heard of. To write more about it now would be impious.

Shortly after Tennyson had been buried in West-

minster Abbey, on an October day in 1892, a committee of his neighbours in Freshwater was formed for the purpose of erecting some memorial in the rural region where half his life had been passed. The memorial was meant to be a local and neighbourly undertaking, and it was thought, naturally enough, that it might be carried out in the form of a monument, tablet, or window, in the village church. But a more fitting idea was adopted.

There stood on the summit of the High Down, "Tennyson's Down" as it is more generally known, a great beacon of heavy, blackened timber surmounted by a cresset, in which, on old nights, long ago, fire had blazed when alarms were signalled from hill to hill along the coast. This beacon had been taken over by the Lighthouse Board and had served through decades as a mark for navigation for the endless processions of ships passing up and down the English Channel and through the Solent by the Needles. Six or seven hundred feet above the sea, and near the edge of a long white cliff, it was easily seen by navigators bound inward or outward. For forty years Tennyson had made it a point of call in his almost daily walks. The committee believed that in the place of the old wooden structure a granite shaft could be erected, serving at once as a memorial to Tennyson and a beacon to seamen.

The Reverend Doctor Merriman, Rector of Freshwater, Colonel Crozier, Doctor Hollis, and others, invited me to join the committee, and I did so, suggesting that Americans would wish to share in erect-

ing the proposed memorial, but that it would be scarcely possible for them to participate were the object undertaken purely as a village or neighbourhood tribute. The broader suggestion was adopted. A Celtic cross in Cornish granite was designed by Mr. J. L. Pearson, of the Royal Academy, and the Brethren of Trinity House (the Lighthouse Board) consented to preserve it in perpetuity if the committee would provide for its erection. I communicated with my old friend, Mrs. James T. Fields of Boston, the widow of Tennyson's American publisher, and she brought together an American committee for the purpose of coöperating with the one in Freshwater. Doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes became her first associate and the first American subscriber. The daughters of Longfellow and Lowell were members of the American committee, and so were Mrs. Agassiz, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Margaret Deland, Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, Professor Charles Eliot Norton, Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Mr. H. O. Houghton, Mr. George H. Mifflin, and others. Several American newspapers courteously drew attention to the proposed memorial, and Mr. George W. Smalley made an appeal through the *New York Tribune*, as I did through other papers. Subscriptions were purposely confined to small amounts so that the humblest lover of Tennyson could contribute his mite. I remember that among the first to come were twenty-five cents "from a bricklayer", and "a dollar from a proof reader."

The cross was erected and now, a quarter of a century later, it shows scarcely a sign of weather,

though it fronts the sun, and the storms beat upon it, seven hundred feet above the sea. It bears this inscription:

IN MEMORY
OF ALFRED
LORD TENNYSON
THIS CROSS IS
RAISED A BEACON
TO SAILORS BY
THE PEOPLE OF
FRESHWATER AND
OTHER FRIENDS
IN ENGLAND
AND AMERICA

Cliff-erosion causes the precipitous brink to creep slowly toward the cross. By or before the middle of the present century it may become necessary to remove the Beacon Cross some yards to the north.

It was, I think, on the day of Tennyson's burial that the following letter appeared in the *Times*, over the signature P. L. I.

"Perhaps the following anecdotes may be of interest, related as they were in a paper read privately by the late James T. Fields, in 1872, during my stay in Boston.

"Mr. Fields said that while staying with the poet at Farringford, Tennyson said at midnight, 'Fields, let 's take a walk!' It was a dark and wild night, the sea breaking at the foot of the cliffs. Knowing the dangers of the place and his near-sightedness, I feared for his safety; however, he trudged on through the thick grass with his stick, I also using the one he had lent me on setting out.

"Presently he dropped on hands and knees in the grass. Alarmed I asked, 'What is the matter?' He answered in a strong, Lincolnshire accent, 'Violets, man, violets! Get thee down and have a smell; it will make thee sleep the better!' He had detected them by his acute sense of smell, aided by his strong love of nature. I dropped down, and the sense of the ridiculous struck me forcibly, — in such a position at midnight lying in the thick grass. He joined in my laughter, and we started for home.

"He was egotistical to an extreme, but it was superb, and deeply impressed one. An old lady once, sitting next to Tennyson while some of his poems were being read, exclaimed, 'Oh! how exquisite!' 'I should say it was,' replied the poet. At another time he said no one could read 'Maud' but himself. 'Fields, come and see me, and I will give you "Maud" so that you will never forget it.' This was perfectly true. I felt I could have listened to him forever, and would go any distance to hear it as he gave it."

There was much more to the same purpose. But Mr. Fields, like several others who have written about Tennyson, may have over-emphasised the poet's "egotism." Tennyson was an absolutely honest man. He said what he thought. If another said that his work was "exquisite" or "superb", or this, or that, he would not affect a self-depreciation which he did not feel. That would have been dishonest. If the work were fine, he knew it and said so. If it were over-praised, he said that too. He was not imposed upon by flattery, and he hated that and detected it easily enough. The "violet" incident above has been quoted frequently. It is quoted here because Mr. Fields was mistaken about

"the thick grass." That does not grow on the down. Besides the furze bushes, there is only close-cropped turf. If he walked through "thick grass" it may have been on the way to and from the down, perhaps, by the way of Maiden's Croft. And on the down the poet would have been in no peril through his short-sightedness. He was a countryman, and knew every inch of the way. A countryman can tell by the slope of the ground, by "the lie of the land" under his feet, whether or not the down is leading him astray. If he is sure-footed, far sight will not help him much in the dark. But Fields, although a kindly soul, was a publisher, and he might easily have felt "ridiculous" when kneeling at the feet of a poet.

A diligent antiquary lived at Freshwater in Tennyson's time. He lived in Easton Cottage, nearly opposite the road-end of Tennyson's Lane. His name was Robert Walker, and he was well advanced in age. When I knew him, in the nineties, he was very deaf, so that talking with him was tiresome. But he had interesting talk to give, even if he received none in return. He had been a dealer in antiques, I forget where, but I remember that he told me he had made and lost two fortunes, and was sheltering his last years under the shreds of the second. He told me, too, that he had been offered the curatorship of a well-known museum, but had declined, preferring retirement in Freshwater. I have a vague recollection of being shown the correspondence. But, at a v rate, the old man promised to confer new fame on F .. water by proving that it

had very ancient fame, indeed, as a harbourage and stage in the overland route to the tin mines of Cornwall in the time of the Phœnicians!

His argument was something like this: In the obscure past there were Phœnicians. So much we grant. They conducted with the world at large, or with as much of it as was then known, a trade in tin. Strabo tells us so. Whence came their tin? From Cornwall. And how did they get to Cornwall? By the Isle of Wight, which seems a roundabout way, but was not so. The "ships" of the Phœnicians "were little more than open boats, partly decked, and liable to be swamped by the dash of the waves over their sides and prows. They were propelled by rowers, numbering from thirty to fifty; if wind served they stepped a single mast and hoisted a single sail." They avoided the heavy seas of the Bay of Biscay, and came by the rivers of France. Up from the Mediterranean they would proceed by the Rhone to where Lyons is now. There they would leave their vessels. From there overland to the Seine, where they had another fleet awaiting them. Then down the Seine to where Havre, or Barfleur, or Cherbourg stand now, and thence across the Channel to the Isle of Wight, the nearest front of barbarian England.

Freshwater was then an island. It is almost an island now. The little tidal river, Yar, rises within a few yards of the Channel and flows north, to the Solent. In those days there was probably no beach at Freshwater Bay; the present beach was formed after modern man had constructed a causeway

there. In those days the waters of the Channel flowed into the Yar, making a shallow estuary sufficient for an anchorage, where the Phœnician craft could lie while their adventurous crews were following the Cornish trail, a feat easily performed, because, in those days, the Isle of Wight was doubtless joined to the mainland at Hurst Castle. If it were not it should have been, in order to add interest to the story.

About the beginning of the eighteen-nineties workmen were widening and lowering the road which skirts Farringford and the Briary, and gives an entrance to the rear of Weston Manor. They dug so closely into a Weston hedge that, in going below the subsoil of it, they discovered the remains of ancient structures containing pottery, ash, charcoal, lime, enamelled bricks, and so on. Walker declared the remains were Phœnician, and the site that of a crematorium and a pottery. He cited evidence which I have not space to record. Being an antiquary he turned on other antiquaries. He wrote a pamphlet. The *Antiquary* magazine took up the case and cited similar discoveries, undoubtedly Phœnician, in South Devon. Warm arguments for and against the Phœnician theory were thrown back and forth. And Freshwater laughed. It was sure, and is sure still, that the anti-Phœnicians had the best of it, and Neighbour Walker the worst of it. A neighbour would have the worst of it, of course. But Walker persuaded the Ward of the time (Granville) to preserve the discoveries and to erect above them two protecting domes of concrete.

Walker, I think, had the best of it, for if he could not prove the remains to have been Phœnician, his adversaries could not prove them to have been anything else. The antiquary is dead, and the local cabmen point, with the scorn of their calling, to "Walker's Pups" in the hedgerow as you drive to Totland or Alum Bay.

Local prophets, here as elsewhere, may prophesy without excess of honour. Tennyson himself used to tell an anecdote which had the run of the village:

"There 's Farringford," said a cabman to a visiting "fare."

"Ah!" responded the latter, "a great man lives there."

"D' ye call him great?" retorted cabby. "He only keeps one man, and *he* don't sleep in the house!"

Just as I reach this point in this chapter, there comes to me, in Hampshire, the news of Lady Ritchie's death. This means the breaking of almost the last link of that old Island circle. And it means the vanishing from life of one of the sweetest and dearest old ladies I have ever known. She was Thackeray's eldest daughter.

When my wife and I left the Island, late in 1918, Lady Ritchie was one of the last friends we saw. She came to our gate to say good-bye. She was then over eighty-one. How many of my friends are more than eighty! The most active youth is ninety-three! He also is an Isle of Wighter. Lady Ritchie was an Isle of Wighter half of every year. She had first visited Freshwater with her father

when she was a child, and her association with it had never ceased since then. For many years past she had a little house there. "The Porch" it was called. The colder half of the year she lived in London, in St. Leonard's Terrace, Chelsea; the warmer half at "The Porch." In 1918, when Chelsea Hospital, the home of the red-coated Old Pensioners, was bombed by German aircraft, she had a narrow escape. Her house faces the hospital grounds, and every window pane in the front was shattered. She was sitting in her drawing-room at the time, but was unhurt by the flying glass and unruffled by the flashing and crashing all about her. She was then approaching her eighty-first birthday. But ladies of eighty-one, however unconquerable, do not go through such an experience without nerve strain. When I saw her again, a few weeks later, she, for the first time, seemed conscious that age was advancing upon her. The pleasant little gatherings became fewer; she was much fatigued after them. But her spirits were as high as ever, and her thought as kindly.

When the United States entered the war, she came to me with a jubilant letter from an old friend of hers in New York. Her friend had written, "I rejoice that you and I are now fighting together, side by side."

"Yes, yes," said Lady Ritchie, reading the letter to me, "think of it! Two old ladies of eighty fighting shoulder to shoulder!" And straightway she made a little American flag which she hung at "The Porch" door, alongside a Union Jack.

She was, I think, the last of that once considerable group whose members always addressed, and alluded to, the first Lord Tennyson as "Alfred." And she was as full of stories of him as an egg is of meat. The last time we passed Farringford together, she said:

"I like to think of the expression on Alfred's face when he was told that a new boy-in-buttons, a country lad whom he had just taken into service, answered the doorbell one day, and saw a tall, sedate gentleman standing there.

"'Tell your master that the Prince Consort has called,' he said to the boy.

"'Oh, crickey!' exclaimed the youngster, who fled to the innermost parts of the house.

"Somehow, I forget how, the message was conveyed to Alfred, who found the Prince waiting at the door, still laughing at the boy's consternation. The Island life was fairly simple in those days."

And what is left of that old life is gracious, kindly, hospitable. In no place in any part of the earth have I met with greater kindliness than in Freshwater. That is why I am fond of the West Wight and have been there so often. I wonder if ever I shall go there again. Once I crossed the Atlantic to go there and only there. And now, to-day that gracious lady of the old time has gone, never to return. How kindly she was, and gentle! What sweet dignity and thoughtfulness, a manner that was not put on and off like a gown. It was innate. There are few left in the world like that dear lady. The present generation calls them old-fashioned.

Theirs was indeed an old fashion, and the world is poorer because it does not know how to match it. Their spirit was not the spirit of the age as we see it at the dawn of the third decade of the Twentieth Century. Farewell, dear lady, you were Thackeray's finest work!

CHAPTER X

GLADSTONE

The enthusiasms and antagonisms set alight by Mr. Gladstone in his long career flame now, a generation after his death, quite as fiercely as they did before the Great War. Not that he was a warlike man, except upon the hustings and in the House. You would think that everybody could see now that Gladstone was right about the Turks. But Woodrow Wilson and the ex-Kaiser have not seen so much. They were on the side of the Turks and Bulgarians. Wilson was so much on their side that he would not fight them, and by his abstention contributed to the situation which made the Armenian massacres a continuous entertainment for Berlin, and isolated Russia from her Allies. And there is Ireland, of course, Ireland with De Valera instead of with Parnell. And there is Egypt. And there is India. All of these synonymes for trouble, and debates in the House. All these troubles to be healed by talk. But there is no one now who talks so well as Mr. Gladstone.

When Gladstone died, men did not agree about what he had done in his more than sixty years of public life, — done, that is, for the United Kingdom

and the Empire. They do not agree now. What was the outstanding achievement of his life, the thing, above all, by which posterity will remember him? Was it his devotion to the freedom of human kind? Perhaps. But the main question is so difficult to answer that I shall not attempt the task, not merely because it is difficult, but mainly because it is not my intention to tread the mazes of British politics.

The Nineteenth Century, the despised Victorian Age, if you please, was an age of great men. Some of them seem smaller now than they did before July, 1914. Bismarck, for example. Bismarck was a liar. Gladstone was not. And yet he had a theological mind. Gladstone's stature has not diminished with the shrinking process of time. But will it diminish? Who can tell? The world salutes his integrity. Does it salute for integrity and courage any political personage of to-day?

The world was taught, generation after generation, that the emergency produces the man. The year 1914 and its six successors brought emergency to every country, such emergency as no country had ever known before. But the emergencies did not produce the political men. Only France produced the political man. Without him, German intrigue would have overrun the world, even after the Germans fled from France and Belgium and the East. We would have been smothered by words and machinations, as northern France and Belgium had been smothered by the Teutonic cloud-bursts. But there was Clémenceau, — Clémenceau who had appointed Foch.

These two men and the Allied commanders brought victory to civilisation. If the politicians do not destroy the work and plans, the "peace" they are making now will endure for a while. If the politicians, toying with their new doll, the League of Nations, keep their heads in the clouds, I believe they will come crashing to earth within ten years, frightened and amazed by a greater and longer war than has yet been known. They sowed its seeds in the Armistice and at Versailles. And later when, month after month, they changed their plans from day to day.

It is sometimes unwise to avoid digressions. No apology is made, or considered necessary, for this one.

I was speaking of Mr. Gladstone. It was my privilege to see him and hear him frequently during twenty years. Perhaps it was due to some defect of nature that I was never much influenced politically by him. His eloquence was anything you may choose to imagine it, and you would have admired it, if you could dissociate from it the involved phrases, the delicate adjustments, the hair-split meanings which might balance any interpretation that might be put upon them, the contradictions, the finely-spun arguments which, woven into the texture of his speeches, would enmesh the unwary, — you would have admired it hugely if you could have dissociated these things from it. His majorities probably did not make the effort. He had the magic of making them forget.

He could be, and was, eloquent on any subject,

and, for that reason, he could and did unsettle many minds on many themes. He was a word-spinner of extraordinary skill and charm, and he made multitudes think they had opinions of their own when their opinions were what he had taught them. That is one of the gifts of leadership. And it was a special privilege of Mr. Gladstone's leadership of democracy that he remained an aristocrat by habit and inclination. Morley's "Life" of him contains this passage from a privately printed account of Ruskin at Hawarden:

"Something like a little amicable duel took place at one time between Ruskin and Mr. G. when Ruskin directly attacked his host as a 'leveller.' 'You see *you* think one man is as good as another, and all men equally competent to judge aright on political questions; whereas I am a believer in an aristocracy.' And straight came the answer from Mr. Gladstone, 'Oh dear, no! I am nothing of the sort. I am a firm believer in the aristocratic principle — the rule of the best. I am an out-and-out *inequalitarian*,' a confession which Ruskin treated with intense delight, clapping his hands triumphantly."

Eloquence has not been rated modestly among the arts during some thousands of years. Whether it has done more for the advancement or the retardation of man may be a subject for dispute. That it has done both is unquestioned by those who talk less than they think. It is a useful accomplishment when the object is to get a body of men to think and act in unison; it is equally useful in promoting disunion. It is therefore of most service to politicians

and preachers, the aim of these gentlemen being to promote unity for their own causes by promoting disaffection in and with all other causes. Of all the statesmen of the nineteenth century, Mr. Gladstone was preëminent in the promotion of disaffection. I do not know that he uprooted anything that deserved to remain among the habits or institutions of mankind; I do not know that he preserved anything that should have been cast upon the dust heap; I do not know that he originated anything; but I always think of him as a great opportunist who was sometimes on the right side, and quite as likely to be on the wrong. But he differed from other conspicuous opportunists in this: he always wrestled with the devil of unbelief. Before adopting a policy he would ask himself, "Is this right?" If he adopted it, you would know that he was convinced of the righteousness of his cause. That he had converted himself, convinced himself by his own eloquence, did not make his conviction less sure, but made it perhaps, more clinching because he had talked himself into belief. His eloquence, therefore, had effect upon himself no less than upon others, as Lord Beaconsfield more than implied when, in a political speech at Knightsbridge, in 1878, he alluded to Mr. Gladstone as "a sophistical rhetorician, inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity."

If Mr. Gladstone has been credited too much and too often with all the qualities of a saint, it was, perhaps, because his opponents were always ready to attribute to him the traits of a devil. In our later time there has been no such adulation and no

such hatred as were poured upon him. And I take it that these excesses were due to his absorption in things, or subjects, rather than to interest in men. Individuals did not interest him; causes did. The cause, whatever it might be, filled the universe. He could not see men, the people were so conspicuous.

It may have been a fault, it was certainly a characteristic, that when he had once resolved, he expected his followers to exchange, as quickly as himself, old ways of thought for new. It did not occur to him until after the event that he had struck not only the wrong but the unpopular note in the American Civil War. He saw the thing in one way only, and he was immensely surprised when he learned that there was another side to the question, and that it was taken by the country most concerned. But he did what he could and subsequently made a long and almost abject confession of error, which might have shaken, if it did not, the general appreciation of his powers of judgment. It will be said there was the case of Ireland. To be sure there was the case of Ireland. It is always with Britain, even if the Irish are not, — as in the war against Germany. But Mr. Gladstone understood Ireland and the Irish as little as, — well, as little as the Americans understand them. Lord Salisbury, on a certain occasion, said that he (Salisbury) had never seen Mr. Parnell. Almost any one, then, might have repeated to him the famous injunction of Oxenstiern: "Go forth, my son, and see with how little wisdom the world is governed."

Lord Salisbury did not know Parnell by sight, and

he gave Heligoland to the Kaiser. Neither Parnell nor Heligoland were important enough in his opinion to justify even visual acquaintance. The world has suffered for his superior neglect in one particular, perhaps in both. But if he, or if Gladstone, or if Gladstone and Salisbury had foreseen what would happen, the world might not have acted any more wisely than it did. It is always too late to be wise. Nobody would have believed the oracles; the truth was in opposition to the world's inclinations. It is usually so. And that is why great men are shunted to the wrong tracks, and so are "great" men only for their age and hour; it is why prophets are stoned, and mediocrities arise and talk, prevailing by sound. Nowadays the eminence of men is fixed by their capacity for catching votes and the commotion they make in doing so.

I thought Mr. Gladstone a vindictive old gentleman. It was not the fashion to think of him in that way. You were supposed to insist upon his more saintly qualities, but there is some difficulty in associating attributes of saintship with eminent politicians during their lifetime, and at the same moment keeping your face straight. The Roman Church, in its sagacity, defers consideration of saintship until long after the decease of the candidates for canonisation. Some centuries, indeed, are required before the purely human element in man may be superseded by the purely divine, even in cases where the voting majority is heavy.

If Mr. Gladstone were not vindictive, I do not see how he contrived so successfully to give that char-

acter to his countenance when he was not speaking. One does not say when his countenance was in repose. Repose was unacquainted with his countenance, or with any part of him. The energy which fully charged his body flowed through his mind in a restless and surging torrent. And if he were vindictive, I do not see anything strange, or much that is derogatory in that. A leader of politics must be genuine, or fall far short of greatness. His opponents cannot be opposed to him merely in a parliamentary sense. They may be as genuine as he, but if he hates their acts as evil in nature and result, he cannot in honesty refrain from distrusting the men who lead and inspire the acts, though he may pretend as much as he pleases to do otherwise. His indignation against men and measures does not cease with the adjournment of the House, or with the close of an electioneering campaign, unless he is a hypocrite. And if he fail to pursue his public enemy for the purpose of making him ineffective for public harm, does he not give a too generous interpretation to public duty? That a man is to be hated only at certain hours, or when he says certain things, is conceivable only by the tolerant mass which must usually be told what to think, and which, nine times out of ten, can be relied upon to think to order, especially on party matters. A political party, in any country, is not intended for thinking purposes, but, like an army, is for fighting purposes. If it 's in, it fights to stay in; if it 's out, it fights to get in. It uses speeches and programmes as military leaders use smoke-screens and gas-discharges,

to obscure the real operations and confound the enemy. In the last century we had not learned, although we may have suspected, that the world must be made safe for hypocrisy. It remained for the twentieth century to announce this.

A journalist who gets below the surface of things cannot remain a party man, for the more useful he is to one party the less useful he is to journalism. Sooner or later, and usually sooner than later, he must come up against the barbed wire which divides proprietary or editorial interests from the area of his own convictions. Perhaps the latter are less important than they seem. But they may be more important. At any rate, like Touchstone's Audrey, they are his, and if he has a conscience, which is to be presumed, a conflict between his pen and his principles is bound to occur, unless his chief, or his employer, is a paragon of courage.

"I can't afford the truth, as you call it," said an editor-proprietor one day, — it was over an article about Gladstone. "I must go with my public." He went with it, but his contributor did not. The latter was given the choice of resigning or writing. He did both. He wrote his resignation. How Mr. Gladstone heard of this I do not know, but hear of it he did. It was to his interest to side with the editor, as he did politically, but he met later the contumacious subordinate and said that he was glad to see a junior who stood by his principles and knew how to do so.

"If I have any advantage over others," said the G. O. M., "it is the advantage of a long experience

which has taught me to value the quality that Cromwell attributed to his soldiers. Oliver said, 'They make some conscience of what they do.' If we are not ruled by conscience, we are in anarchy. Good conscience makes for fair fighting in politics or war."

"Yes, but, Mr. Gladstone, if the opponent *does n't* fight fairly?"

"'Bear it that the opposed must beware of thee!'"

That is well as far as it goes. But we do not "fight by the book of arithmetic." Did "the opposed" in Mr. Gladstone's wars beware of him, or of his England? One does not seem to recall their wariness. Not even the Mahdi's. Gordon fought with the front door open, so to speak. Gladstone did not then "make the opposed beware" of his administration, *i.e.* England, for the time being. And there were other cases. Is it only one's own side that must beware of a policy of dilly-dally? The "ecstatic madman", as Lord Acton, in one of his letters, called Gordon, gave the world furiously to think. But Gladstone knew what Gordon was when he sent him out. And it is more difficult now than it was then to relieve the venerable statesman of responsibility. Gladstone hated war. But his hatred of it did not make war any the less inevitable or less necessary. The enemy rejoiced because the G. O. M. hated war. Let the Pacifists note!

Of the many times when I saw Gladstone at close range, I recall at the moment a night at the Lyceum while Irving was playing "The Merchant of Venice." From my seat it was easily possible to observe the

Grand Old Man in his stall. The eagle eyes had always fascinated me. It was as interesting to watch his terrific face as to watch Irving. "Terrific" is not too strong a word. Gladstone's face during the Tubal scene reflected every emotion of vengeance that forced itself from Shylock's soul, and during the Trial scene he glared at Antonio with inquisitorial ferocity while Shylock whetted his knife. It would be the usual and conventional thing to describe this as a tribute to Irving's acting, and in support of this to quote Gladstone's appreciation of that distinguished man, "Shylock is his best, I think"—but the spectator at a play, if we may take Hamlet's word for it, is readier to show sympathy with the victim than with the tormentor; and it was not until after Shylock had whetted his blade that he became changed from the victorious torturer to the abjectly tortured man. Up to that point Gladstone's face expressed demoniacal glee; after it he did not appear to be interested. The psychologists and the partisans may quarrel over this as they please. I think that non-partisans who had much opportunity to study the old parliamentarian's face at close range, amid varying conditions, will not quarrel over this interpretation, or with the adjective employed.

Take another and a very different instance, when Gladstone was the central figure of a moving scene. It was a Liberal Conference at Manchester, in December, 1889. Gladstone had been ill. The press had reported him seriously ill. It was unlikely, the papers said, that he could again address a public

meeting, unlikely that he would reappear in the political field. But he appeared at Manchester, and his appearance drew the attention of all Liberal Britain, and a good share of its representative men in person. The immense hall was packed. The seats had been removed from the floor to make room for a greater throng than could otherwise gather. So close was the pressure that it was impossible to move one's arms, even to raise them. The audience worked itself, or rather was worked, to a high pitch of enthusiasm by a skilful organist who played upon them with patriotic songs and Scottish, Welsh, and English ballads. When the kettle was boiling merrily over this fire, and the lid rattling up and down, an old, grey head, world-famous, was seen rising through the platform-crowd, and the alert and venerable figure which carried it moved quickly to the front against a whirlwind of cheers. The roar was like that of a gale-driven sea beating against cliffs. It did not cease until its idol had raised his hand for silence. When it had ceased he sat down, and the chairman called the meeting to order.

A few minutes later, the chairman called upon Mr. Gladstone to speak. The G. O. M. rose to another outburst of welcome, and, upon obtaining silence, said: "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen." And then the storm of cheering broke anew. It continued for a quarter of an hour, gaining constantly in force and volume. It was taken up in the crowded streets. It was a tempest of sound, within, without. The five words had started an avalanche! When had those five words, or any five, unloosed

such clamour? The voice that uttered them had boomed through the great hall like the discharges of big guns. The deep, strong tones, the alertness of motion, the flash of the eagle eyes, said to the assemblage more than the words. Eighty years? Yes, but eighty years young, with health, vigour, fighting power undiminished. The audience could not restrain its joy. Roar upon roar succeeded, wave upon wave of emotion rolled over the crowd; it was a demonstration of thanksgiving, of congratulation, of delight. I have never seen or heard its equal in all the pageants, conventions, progresses, demonstrations of popular enthusiasm that I have witnessed in many parts of the world. Above them all this stands alone, unique in fervour and significance.

"Standing as I do on the verge of four score years" — was the note to which the audience again responded. The shouting was a personal tribute, not merely a political one. I cannot remember what the G. O. M. said in his speech, but I remember that there was scarcely anything of a specific character concerning political measures or men. Gladstone was keeping his powder dry. He dealt in generalities. He was always at his best when so dealing. He lifted his themes to an exalted pitch and did not wreck himself on details.

It was only his greyness that acknowledged age. His voice was as deep and rich as ever it had been, his bearing as alert, his movements as graceful. He seemed to say, "It is impossible to grow old, but, as I cannot live forever, let us get on with the work in

hand." His capacity for believing that the moon is made of green cheese, and, what was more important, of making others believe it, was boundless. What was the spell he cast upon his hearers? Even when he was in Opposition, perhaps because of that, for he was best then, the House of Commons would be crowded when he spoke. I have seen him at such a time switch on his green-cheese oratory and hold the House for an hour or two, tense, expectant, submissive under the spell. When he finished, great cheering would rise from both sides, — from his followers because they were charmed, or overwhelmed, and, being of his party, believed in the green-cheese theory and were ready to eat the cheese; from his opponents because they too were charmed, or all but overwhelmed, and for the moment forgot that fealty to their own party should have left the other side of the House to do the cheering. If a vote could have been taken when Gladstone ended his speech, the House would have been unanimous for cheese. But parliamentary procedure permits, or compels, a leading opponent to reply, and the reply broke the spell and recalled several hundred Britons to their partisan duties.

It was always amusing to watch Gladstone's face when he came before an enthusiastic audience either in the outer world or within the House of Commons. As the cheers of welcome increased, he would look about him in a puzzled way, as if he were wondering what caused the demonstration, as if he were asking himself, "What have I done to be dragged from obscurity?" It has often been said that "he could

have been a great actor." But he *was* one. It has also been said that he would have been a great archbishop. But archbishops in his time led such tame lives that Mr. Gladstone would have been discontented with the episcopal lot. It is easy, though, to imagine him cursing magnificently with bell, book, and candle. He was a great performer.

His detachments were even more remarkable than the attachments of other men. No subject absorbed him save when he was working on it. That is another way of saying that his power of concentration was absolutely under control at all times. He would turn from the subject which he had dropped for the day to another subject which he would work at for half an hour, or six weeks, or six years, or a lifetime, and give all his energies to the task in hand, and yet be ready to concentrate at a minute's notice on whatever might turn up. They say he had no sense of humour. Perhaps they mean that he was not witty. Perhaps he did n't appreciate jokes. It is not always easy to know what "they" mean by a sense of humour. I have known Gladstone to keep the House of Commons laughing for a quarter of an hour by sheer exercise of the comic spirit, although it must be said that he did not often exercise this. But when he did it, there was purpose in it. The tragedy, that is to say, the serious business of the hour, was to follow. Seeing Gladstone in his great moments was like seeing Edwin Booth as Richelieu; you had similar thrills, smiles, and satisfaction.

Very few persons outside his family knew him really well, no matter how long they might have

been associated with him in public work. All the men who knew him that I knew agreed in one thing, however much they disagreed in others, — he had the spirit and the manner of command. A public gathering, a cabinet council, a dinner party were equally his. It will be remembered that he addressed Queen Victoria as if she were a public meeting, and she did n't like it. But that illustrates what I mean when saying that he was not interested in persons but in causes, or subjects; he was not interested in a dinner party but in what he had to tell it. The other guests — his hosts, too — might have been disembodied spirits, but it was he who would "communicate" with them, not they with him. He would detach himself from them as easily as from politics.

He made his own "atmosphere", and it was often far removed from politics. Thus, at the approach of the political crisis of 1886, just before the House was to vote on his first Home Rule Bill, he was staying with his wife at Lord Aberdeen's house at Dollis Hill. A friend of mine, not a political personage, was of the house party, and he told me how the G. O. M. would drive out from town alone, after dark, in an open carriage, and forget the fate of governments, especially his own, although that fate was to be decided within a few hours.

Entering the drawing-room, he said, "While driving out here from the House last evening I counted twenty-eight omnibuses going in one direction. To-day being Saturday, I thought the number would be larger than that, and I estimated thirty-five. I

counted thirty-six." And then he discoursed on the increasing business of passenger transportation in the metropolis. Not a word about politics.

On the following afternoon (Sunday) the members of the Cabinet and other prominent partisans went out to Dollis Hill for an informal consultation with the Prime Minister. They were uneasy in their minds. The vote would be taken next day, and they might find themselves out of office, — as indeed they did for the six years following. The afternoon being fine, they walked in the garden and discussed the perils of the situation, and waited for Mr. Gladstone to summon them, or to come and join them. They continued to walk and wait. But Mr. Gladstone did not appear, nor did he summon any one. But the Secretary for Ireland thought that he might be engaged with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Home Secretary thought that he might be with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Still Gladstone did not send word, and the political mountains waited for Mahomet. Concluding that the old gentleman was fatigued and had gone to his room for a nap, they began to retreat homeward. They left singly, and by twos and threes, after some hours of vain waiting. By and by the Gladstones appeared and told their host that they had had "a charming afternoon." They had strolled to the garden gate and had stopped to look at the view. The country road enticed them. They came to a pretty church, and as service was about to begin, they entered and remained for the benediction. They had returned slowly, but highly edified. The next day Gladstone

met his foes and was cast into the cold shades of opposition. Doubtless he had expected this, but, doubtless, he had not expected to be cast so deep, — six years' deep.

I remember what a former ally of his had said to me just before the Manchester Conference: "No, I am not going to Manchester. I don't agree with Gladstone's Irish policy, but I know that if I were to go to Manchester I would shout with the rest." Those were days when the world had sunk far into the morasses of parliamentary talk. All things were to be settled by talking and voting and pious intentions. A complacent faith in Democracy was to save the world, if, indeed, the world were not already saved by it. In English-speaking countries it had become little short of dishonourable to praise naval and military valour; and reliance upon force as the defence of a nation was thought to be unchristian. Democracy was to be shielded by its own virtue. We have heard that since the Great War, too. It is the old story of an old dream. Envy, hatred, and malice had departed from the world. There would be no more cause for great wars. The era of perpetual peace was about to dawn. Nations were to put their trust in a parliamentary God, a Deity of Congresses. When every one voted, there would be a new heaven on a new earth. The credulous invented a new kind of treason of which any one was accused when he expressed, publicly, doubts of the sanity of a democracy which could not see that the voter unprepared to defend his "sacred vote" by arms was risking his privilege, his goods, his kith and

kin, was imperilling his right to live as a freeman. He had put his faith in words. Mr. Gladstone was the nineteenth century's greatest conjuror with words. But he was incapable of demanding, as Woodrow Wilson did, that a nation should be "neutral in thought", while freedom, the very right to think, was being beaten down. Gladstone would not have blundered like that, you say. But it was not a blunder, it was a crime.

CHAPTER XI

WHISTLER

A FAMILIAR voice said, "Come!"

It was Whistler's voice. I turned and answered, "All right. Where?"

The slender, dapper figure halted; over the quizzical face a look of astonishment flashed; the flat-brimmed silk hat lifted perceptibly by the contortion of an eyebrow; and the immortal monocle dropped into the right hand as was its habit when punctuating a sentence of its controller. The monocle was Whistler's question mark, his exclamation point, his full stop; it served even as parenthesis when occasion demanded.

"Where," replied Whistler, "where should an honest Londoner go at this hour but home to dine? Come, then! Escape the awful gaze of the rude world. We 're blocking Bond Street. Let 's call a worthy hansom."

A hansom worthy of its fare was found by searching, — varnished, resplendent; it bore a striped awning, and its driver was smart and wore a boutonnière; and its horse shone and arched a proud neck. We were at Chelsea in ten minutes. We were

neighbours there. Stopping the cab at the Tower House, in Tite Street, Whistler alighted, exclaiming:

"And the painter and his bride said 'come.' We are not out of the packing cases yet; but come in. I've something to show you. You must stay and dine, or I won't show you what it is."

And we mourned to his flat.

Mrs. Whistler knew that I was accustomed to "Jimmie's" ways, and so she affected no surprise when she met us at the door and learned that I had come to dinner. She merely said, as if it were all in the day's work:

"We've just moved in. Pardon the chairs. Let's have a housewarming of it."

It was easy to pardon the chairs", for there were none to pardon in the drawing-room to which I was shown. There were only unpacked packing cases. And on one. Whistler turned on the [illegible] into another room from which [illegible]y, showing his roguish smile [illegible] hands a bundle of printer's [illegible] beside me on my packing case. [illegible], screwing his monocle into his [illegible]

"There's the thing I wanted to show you; my *magnum opus:* 'The Gentle Art of Making Enemies.' Do you mind looking 'em over, with an eye to correction, while you wait? My idea's a brown paper cover like the 'Ten O'Clock.'"

And with that he darted out again, returning immediately with a box of cigars and a case filled with cigarettes.

"Burnt offering to the High Gods," he said. "I go to prepare the libations."

And he went.

Mrs. Whistler, after a few gracious words, went also, presumably to give directions for the table. I was left to myself, the packing cases, the proofs, and the cigars. My watch sa[illegible]ven thirty, and presently seven forty-five, [illegible] on the heels of that, eight o'clock. I was [illegible]ted, but I was also hungry. But neither of t[illegible]istlers had yet reappeared. Meantime I read [illegible]d on, admiring immensely and chuckling every [illegible]ute or two over the stupidities, the jealousies, the ridiculous fo[illegible]s of mankind as revealed in "The Gentle Art." it was nine o'clock! Jimmie c[illegible]a with a [illegible] bundle of newspaper clippings.

"Read!" he cried. "Some [illegible]se should be included, don't you think so? [illegible] hungry!" Then he disappeare

I was too hungry to smoke.

There were sounds occasion[illegible] closed door. Although none[illegible] encouraging; they at least i[illegible] ence and the probability, in an u[illegible] food. At nine forty-five I had reached the end of the proofs, the press clippings, and almost of patience, when Jimmie came tripping in with pantomimic action which meant abasement and a plea for mercy. Then said he:

"I fear the Lord hath made me forgetful of time. But there 's atonement toward. Have you read 'em? Oh, Sheridan, Sheridan Ford, thou naughty

one, prepare for doom! Madame, I pray you do the honours."

And Mrs. Whistler, who had appeared behind him, enchanted me by saying, "Dinner is served."

It was ten o'clock! The Whistlerian hour. I do not know what they had been doing. Had they been unpacking china and linen and chairs, while the maid foraged the neighbouring shops? Had an unpremeditated feast produced itself by Jimmie's conjuring? Had Jimmie cooked the dinner while Mrs. Whistler arranged the table with its dainty ware, and silver, and soft linen, and shaded lights? Or had they reversed the parts? I shall never know. But there was the daintiest, most delicious dinner, most charmingly served, and there were two or three kindly wines, a coffee that the master himself had prepared, and a soothing *liqueur* from his beloved Paris. It was a dinner that more than once came to perishing on a packing case. Over it all Whistler summed up his views of life and art, as previously and subsequently he had set it forth elsewhere. We sat till long after midnight in high session, debating selections from press clippings which had been showered upon him by his "excellent Romeike." "Shall I put in this, or omit that? Here 's something too good to lose!" And so, with what he called "infinite jerriment", another portion of "The Gentle Art" began to take shape. In its further progress I had no hand, as I was off to America in a day or two, and Jimmie needed no aid in goading his solicitors to the pursuit of Sheridan Ford who had, Whistler

said, infringed his literary rights. The p
Sheridan was an epic which aroused n
nine days' wonder; it led from London to
from Antwerp to Paris, from Paris to
and back to London again. The "Ext
Piratical Plot" was defeated, the "pi
tion" was suppressed, and, in the early
1890, there appeared, published by the
sympathetic, and cordial aid of Mr. Willi
mann *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies as Pl*
Exemplified in Many Instances, Wherein the S
Ones of this Earth, Carefully Exasperated, Have
Prettily Spurred On to Unseemliness and Indiscretion,
While Overcome by an Undue Sense of Right. The
dedication was no less characteristic:

"To the rare Few, who, early in Life, have rid Themselves of the Friendship of the Many, these pathetic Papers are inscribed."

Upon my return from America I found the Whistlers established at Number 21 Cheyne Walk a few steps from my own door. It was not Whistler's good fortune to live long in any house, at any rate in those years. He had two years, or something less, at Tower House, and something less, I think, at Cheyne Walk, and, in April or May, 1892, he removed to Paris. After that I saw him but seldom, for my wanderings upon the face of the planet were to increase and multiply. But during the '88–'92 period he was often in my home. It was his peculiarity and privilege not to come when he was asked, or expected, but invariably to arrive as a sudden gift from the gods, and for the most part

he chose the Sunday-evening "Smoke Talks" rather than the suppers, because at the latter he would be more likely to encounter some of "the Serious Ones of this Earth", already "carefully exasperated", in which case he would be bored, while at the former he would be sure to meet the choicest talkers at a late hour. He would drop in at eleven, or at midnight, and stay till two in the morning with half a dozen congenial beings who would not only relish his wit, but sparkle with their own, and who were capable of appreciating him as an artist without requiring explanatory charts and diagrams.

One such evening we had been talking of Carlyle, who had lived around the corner in Cheyne Row. Whistler told some pleasant anecdote of him.

"There!" exclaimed Theodore Wores, a disciple of Whistler's, "I always thought Carlyle was not so black as he 's painted."

Whistler sprang to his feet, and falling back in mock horror, cried, as he stared at Wores, "*Et tu, Brute?*"

The room shook with laughter.

On another occasion a well-known critic was laying down the law about somebody's "technique." He appealed to Whistler for confirmation.

"My dear fellow," said Whistler, "that 's an opinion one would wish to express *diffidently*." Among his hearers was an artist accustomed to illustrate in *Punch* some of the "Things one would wish to express differently."

You know what Whistler said to the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII) at an Exhibition

of the Royal Society of British Artists. Whistler, recently elected president, was showing the Prince around the galleries.

"What is the history of your Society?" asked the Prince.

"It has none, Sir; its history begins to-day," was the quick reply. It fitted like a glove. There were sleepy years behind; and anything you like later. Whistler stirred up the pools of somnolence. He did not stir them long, for the British artists of those days, whether or not they were interested in art, preferred Britons for presidents. I daresay they were right.

One afternoon he came to my flat with the tall bamboo wand which he often used, in Chelsea at any rate, instead of a walking stick. He was of a phenomenal slenderness, which was emphasised by the long wand, and the long, flat-brimmed hat, and the long, black, tight coat. He had yellow gloves, and his little soft shoes — his feet were the smallest I ever saw on a man — were the last word in daintiness. No London maker could have produced them. Jimmie was always, at all points, fastidious. He gesticulated more than any Briton, but his gesticulations were not Parisian, they were Whistlerian. He pointed dramatically to the ceiling and murmured, "White, all white."

"White." Then to the walls — "All white. And a white you can wash! Londoners forget that they must live in their houses in winter. All their colours are dismal, and there 's no sun."

"Apropos?" I was about to enquire.

"Did n't you tell me, the other day, that you intended redecorating this place?"

"Sometime, when my ship comes in."

"It does n't need a ship. A navy would n't do for Cheyne Walk. May I offer a suggestion?"

"The knowledge of a lifetime," said I, quoting his famous hit at the Ruskin trial.

"Very well then; I 'll come in."

And he went all around the flat, pointing here and there with his bamboo wand, and saying, "Such-and-such a colour here, and such a line there. My dear boy, this is the whole secret, — tone and line. The good colour — the right one — and the good line — the right one — cost no more than the wrong. People overlook these things; they forget them, they ignore them altogether, and then have the misfortune to live. They don't go mad, because they 're British. And you 'll not, because you 'll have the right colour and the right line. Come. Let 's walk. I 'm free for the evening. We 'll dine at the Club."

That was Whistler, Whistler the neighbour, the phase of him that I knew quite as well as any other phase. Later on, when I "did up" my flat, I remembered the details of his suggestions, and carried them out. The result was that I had one of the most delightful flats in London.

The appreciation of those who understood warmed his heart. He had had to fight his way from the beginning against the least imaginative, the stodgiest, the narrowest, the most unsympathetic criticism, and the most prejudiced, because the least

enlightened public (as to art) in the world. But his fighting was not for his own hand merely; he was the champion of art as against ignorance, complacent or aggressive.

It is difficult to believe now that for many years in the last century Whistler's work was opposed with rancour, or bitterly derided. Now the world salutes his memory as that of a master; then he was called a coxcomb, a charlatan, an impostor, excepting by "the rare Few" who had rid themselves of the blighting ignorances of the many. There were many pigmies who, because they walked on stilts, were thought to be giants in those days. Their stilts warped, or broke long ago, their lights have dimmed with the passing years, or their names are remembered merely as having been targets for Whistler's wit. Had he not "killed" these men, their existence would have been forgotten.

As I have said already, it was not Whistler the fighter, nor Whistler the "airy-incomprehensible" whom I saw most frequently in Carlyle Mansions, but Whistler the neighbour. I do not remember that any one has ever written of him in that character. He used to drop in on dreary, rainy evenings when, he said, "the world depressed" him, or when some happy stroke of fortune had gratified him. Or he would come on moonlit nights and gaze from my high windows where the views of Thames were quite remarkable, and drop his fighting mood, his satire, his butterfly attributes. I had called him "the butterfly with the sting." The phrase pleased him. "Yes, there you have me," he said.

But he would drop the sting, and the monocle, and the air of the sprite, and would be quite human, almost "One of the serious of this Earth." One night he came jubilantly, and no sooner had he lost himself in a grandfather's chair by the fireplace, than he said, with a kind of moan:

"He 's gone!"

"Who 's gone?" I asked.

"My old friend Thomas Carlyle. He lived with me many a year, and I sold him to-day for a base thousand pounds." This with a touch of sadness, permitting the monocle to drop into his right hand, and gazing reflectively at the fire. Then, with a sudden turn towards me: "The Mun-eeee-ci-pal Corrrrporration o' Glasgie has purchased it for its Arrt Museum." The monocle was thrust to the eye again where it seemed to flash the question, "What do you think of that?"

I thought very well of it, and said something to the effect that it was a wise city which knew enough to buy such a masterpiece.

"Surprising, is n't it?" said Whistler, and then he told me that a committee of braw Scots had called at his studio to conduct the negotiations for Glasgow. His mimicry of the baillies I will not try to reproduce here. Type cannot present it. Action, expression, accent, all are lost. It was a delightful imitation, and I shouted with laughter when Whistler mounted the climax of his story:

"'But Mr. Wheestler,' said one of the baillies, by way of expostulation over the price I had modestly suggested, 'but Mr. Wheestler, this is a moderrn

paainting, an' I ken that moderrn paintings mostly faade.'

"Behold me there," continued Whistler, "the Butterfly Rampant, hotly retorting, 'Gentlemen; you are mistaken. It is the damnation of modern paintings that they do *not* fade!'"

It was about the same time that France bought that other masterpiece, the portrait of "The Artist's Mother." Whistler came to tell me a few hours after the transfer to Paris had been arranged. He said quietly, as if he were touched deeply,

"France gives me honour, and I accept the invitation for Mother. Mother goes to the Luxembourg, and, after my death, to the Louvre. They pay her expenses, for what more does the *honorarium* amount to? It 's only one hundred and twenty pounds. But one cannot sell one's Mother. She will be glad that I am represented in the Luxembourg, and later in the Louvre. I am glad it is Mother who will represent me."

And then, probably because he feared that he was dropping into sentiment, he broke off gaily with a jest about "another ghost who haunted the pavements of Chelsea", a critic stung to death by the Butterfly, "the late Harry Q—" still haunting Tite Street. "The late Harry", it may be said to children of the present hour, was quite as much alive as Whistler, and occupied — Whistler said "haunted" — the house which Jimmie had built and which he had lost in bankruptcy.

I had received from a friend in Boston a letter asking if I would "sound Whistler" about the proba-

bility of his accepting a commission for the decoration of some part of the Public Library. The authorities hesitated about approaching him. They had an idea that his attitude toward America was antagonistic, they knew he was "touchy"; they did not wish to submit a proposal, or to invite a suggestion, that might, ninety-nine chances to one, evoke a scornful reply. He might tell them he was not a housepainter. "You are a friend of his. Won't you find out how he would receive a proposal, and advise us how best to make an approach?"

One day when, like Rosalind, he was in "a coming-on disposition", I asked, "What is your real attitude towards America?"

"I have n't any," said he. "How can a man have an attitude toward a continent? Oh, there are the discerning; more of them, perhaps, over there than here. But there 's no 'public taste' there nor here. There never was 'public taste' anywhere. There 's only the relation of beauty to the discerning. That 's all. But the American mind is not closed. The English mind is closed and bound. England wants art that tells stories. I want art that tells of beauty."

"If the discerning in America were to say, 'There 's Whistler now, an American; we wish him to do a great public work' — for instance, a room in the Boston Library, or something like that, — well, would you accept? "

"Of course! It would be the evidence of discernment that I 've been waiting for. But there 's no chance of it."

"Yes, there is; I assure you there is."

"If that 's true, I 'd really like it. I 'd like it immensely."

"Hand on heart?"

"Hand on heart!"

The offer came to him, but, as far as I know, he never carried out the work.

He left Chelsea soon after that, going to Paris to live. But before going to Paris he met, at my home, my dearest friend, of whom I shall write later. My friend is dead now, but he had produced then two excellent novels and a successful play. Whistler expressed an interest in him, and he looked in one evening to ask me if he might borrow the books. I lent them to him. Here is another aspect of his entertaining character. After he had been some months in Paris, I wrote to him reminding him of the volumes, which, for certain personal reasons, the author never permitted to be reprinted.

Fatal error!

Whistler never replied. I never saw him again. But that was Travel's fault, not mine. I never heard again from Whistler. And he never returned the books!

CHAPTER XII

HENRY DRUMMOND

We were smoking churchwarden pipes and telling how Jock This and Sandy That had made their money. I hope the Free Kirk folk will not be scandalised by the revelation, especially by that of the churchwardens. While Drummond lived I concealed this grievous sin, but now that he has been dead nigh upon a quarter of a century, I think he will fare no worse for it in heaven, whatever might have been the case in Glasgow in the early nineties. He wore a velvet smoking jacket, too, and we toasted our toes before his study fire on one of the worst nights it has ever been my fortune to see in Scotland or elsewhere. The wind was lifting roofs and toppling chimneys to the ground, and the rain was like streams from a thousand fire engines. There was never a better night for a fireside.

Jock This and Sandy That got into the conversation (not bodily but in essence) because their experiences illustrated what Professor Drummond was saying about "getting on in the world." And he was saying these things because he liked talking other men's shop, not his own. The point he made was this: it is n't necessary to emigrate in order to pros-

per. He had been talking to a group of young men about this that very day. He had a way with him when talking to young men.

"How do men get bored?" he asked. "I never get bored. I can be interested in something always. Time never drags on my hands. But Jock and Sandy can't get interested unless they are making more money, so they keep at it all the time. They are lost without their occupation. Money is a fine thing — to use. If you have n't it, the man who has it uses you as well as his money. Can we find the way to make money without becoming its slaves, as almost all men are who make it?"

In the early nineties Henry Drummond was what they call "one of the best sellers." Who reads him now? I ask for information. If his books had been fiction, we could understand that the fashion had changed in twenty years. But has the fashion changed in God?

Youth used to follow Drummond in troops. When he died more than the youth of Scotland mourned. But youth does not mourn long. It has in that respect the advantage of age, which usually makes new friends only with difficulty; youth has but to summon them, and they come. Drummond had an immense capacity for friendship. I have said he had a way with youth; yes, of both sexes and all ages. But his greatest friends were young men; and his greatest friend of all was D. L. Moody, the revivalist.

Drummond was saying, as we sat before the fire, drawing clouds from churchwardens:

"I don't believe in old saws, do you? Now there 's:

"'Early to bed, and early to rise,
Make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.'

"What nonsense! Healthy, if you like, but how wealthy and how wise is the manual labourer?

"'Bed at dark,
Up with the lark.'

"Suppose you work with a night shift? Try bringing up a generation on these old wives' tales. But they 're merely an example of our British habit of trying to rule by phrases instead of by ideas."

In the hall around the corner, I thought, they might suspect this sort of thing as inclining toward heresy. But you never can tell. "One man," as a proverb-muddled acquaintance of mine used to say, "one man may lead a horse to water, but another may not look over the fence."

They were still buying Drummond's books in large quantities, — "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" and "The Greatest Thing in the World." I liked to think that the slender gentleman with longish hair, who was sartorially British to the *nth* power, could write things like that in the morning and in the evening keep me company with a churchwarden, and these were very long churchwardens, old style, and we smoked "Glasgow Mild." Drummond, being a sensible man, wanted, as I say, to talk some other man's shop. He wanted to talk mine but could not pin me down. It was his shop I wanted. One of his young men with a literary

turn wished to go to America and become a journalist. Would I advise?

"Why America?" I enquired mildly. "You have admirable newspapers in Scotland. Besides, you were saying that 'it is n't necessary to emigrate in order to prosper.'"

"It 's unkind to remind a man of his inconsistencies," said he.

"I would like to save a good Scot, especially if young, from the mutilations of American journalism. More especially if literary. Tell him to learn the trade at home first. He 'll be trained more thoroughly here. There they 'll put him 'on space' to the uttermost ruin of any literary gift he may have. Space-writing means word-spinning — the more words the more money, if you have the knack of escaping the blue pencil. Space-work will knock seven-ways-for-Sunday any literary turn he may have. American journalism will do that, anyhow."

"Perhaps I 'd better kill him."

"My dear sir, your American experiences have done you good."

"They put me under gas and injected the spirit."

And with that we heard the clock strike the hour when we should start for the place where he was to lecture that evening on "The Greater Gratitude."

Professor Drummond, in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World", had attempted, as a clerical and friendly critic said, "to treat religion as a fact of nature, no less solid and capable of scientific analysis than any other fact which science claims for its

own." Everybody read the book, for it was translated into all the European languages. And everybody read its successor, "The Greatest Thing in the World." The volumes, which were small, carried the name of their author around the globe in a large way, for they came from the press in tens of thousands. I suppose he had a million readers, and the most these knew about him was that he held the professorship of natural science in the Free Church College at Glasgow, that he was but little over thirty when he wrote the little books, and that, for a year, he had disappeared in the wilds of Africa. He returned to find himself famous, or as some thought and said, notorious.

He had fluttered the theologians, not flattered them. He was a theologian himself. His object was to stretch theology to man's size. The champions of a hundred orthodoxies and heterodoxies chattered fiercely behind their bulwarks of texts. It seems a very small matter now, but, after all, it helped us all, for Drummond was a helpful man. He was a young man's man, and there you have one of the keys to him.

To be a professor of anything in the Free Kirk College might imply that a man was hampered as to words and views. It was not so in Drummond's case, at any rate. I have said that he was a theologian; I will add that he was a geologist. When I knew him, he was famous and forty-two, and he had recently discovered in Glasgow the remains of a fossil forest. He had just returned from America, where he had been lecturing at the Lowell

Institute, in Boston, on "The Evolution of Man." How he laughed over his Boston surprise! Of course he knew the Lowell Institute by name, but he had n't an idea of what it really was. He had supposed that he would have an audience of two or three dozen old fogies and a number of short-haired blue-stockings. He found the place crammed with alert human beings, mostly young, and all enthusiastic. There was a greater crowd outside, hoping vainly to get in. His thought was, as he mounted the platform: "My lecture won't do. I must popularise it. There are no Dryasdusts here." He altered the lecture as he went along, and when he had finished, he returned to his hotel and undertook to rewrite all the lectures he had brought from Scotland. There were no fogies in the throngs that heard him. He had already been two or three times to America; now he began to understand what it really was, — the country of the young.

Drummond lived at Number 3 Park Circus, Glasgow. He kept bachelor's hall there, and kept it very well, indeed. The house was spacious, "rich not gaudy", the rooms set in carved woods and trophies of ivory, and everything about them suggesting comfort and agreeable taste. It did not in the least suggest the abiding place of a theologian, Scottish or otherwise, and it did not hint at the granite-like hardness of the houses of some geologists I have known. If I say that we had jolly evenings there, smoking churchwardens and talking of travel, the life of cities, and Scottish tales, and New England and Old England, and the Academy, and books,

and Gladstone, and Hyde Park, and the Rocky Mountains, it is only to show that theological-geologists can be human. Drummond was more than human; he was companionable. He had always the appearance of ease, but he was a persistent worker. Work never drove him, though; he held the reins over it and mastered it. If you had an appointment with him, the time was yours; he had set it apart; you were not made to feel that there was any pressure. This may seem a simple thing to do; but, as most men live, it is not.

Drummond's person was tall and slender; he had brown hair; his eyes were — shall I call them brownish-grey? — his moustache and short side whiskers inclined to a sandy tint; his voice was pleasing, and he shook hands with a hearty grip. He attracted you not so much by cordiality as by sincerity. He went to the point at once.

I was making a study of British municipal policy and administration, with a view to certain movements in America. Drummond was helpful daily. He knew the things that had been done and the men who did them; he knew the practical fellows and the extremists; the men who worked at reforms and the men who merely talked about them; the originators and the copyists; the men who were out for politics and party, and the men who were out for the good they could do. And so I got at results and saved time and weariness, though not without much weariness and time. Down narrow, grimy streets, piloted by Bailie This, or Bailie That, or Superintendent Thus and So, or Overseer of T'other,

I went by day and night through the densest, soul-rending parts of Glasgow; up twisting flights of stairs, through murky alleys and through atrocious smells; people were shovelled there to live as they could. At every little distance we would come to spaces where old masonry was being levelled, and new bright buildings going up; lodging houses, tenements, model dwellings, bathhouses, feeding places, washing places, drying places, places where the sunlight and air could enter, could sweep about, — the municipality was overhauling things.

I would return to Drummond's, rid myself of the everlasting Scotch mist, have a bath, a nap, a change of clothing, and then tuck my knees under his mahogany, tell about what I 'd seen, and the drenching, fatiguing day, and, "as sure as eggs is eggs", his explanations would bring in Moody.

"That was Moody's doing," he would say; or "Moody started us," or "Moody collected the money to begin this work, or that," or "Moody showed us the way."

Moody was "the biggest man I ever knew," he said.

"Then why not talk of him?"

"I 'd like nothing better. Unless you knew him, and knew him at work, you could n't half appreciate him." I feared I never did. "Well, then, take him as a manager of men —" and there would begin a run of anecdote showing that the renowned evangelist was a great organiser, and would have been as great in the business world, or the political world, or the military world, had he chosen to enter, as

he had been in the hearts of Scotsmen, Englishmen, and Americans.

Moody had discovered Edinburgh, or Edinburgh had discovered Moody; I was never quite sure which. Anyhow, Moody made Drummond discover himself and his work in life, and that is the most important discovery a man can make. Drummond was a Scotsman of the Scots. He was born near the field of Bannockburn. He came of God-fearing folk, or as he preferred to say, God-loving. His father was a wealthy merchant, and meant that his boy should become a minister. But the boy took his theology without going in for orders. He made science his profession, and taught theology to scientists and science to theologians.

"I would never be wholly off with the one, nor wholly on with the other," said he. "I am fond of both. And I believed that I was better as a geologist and botanist than I could possibly be as a preacher."

When Moody and Sankey came to Scotland, the latter, with his keen capacity for selecting staff officers, selected Drummond as one of his. Drummond shared two years of labour with the American revivalists. They went through England, Scotland, Ireland. Then Moody and Sankey returned to America, and Drummond returned to his studies, religious and scientific, gained his professorship, taught his classes, wrote his books, carried on evangelical work among young men, geologised in Malta, Africa, and the Rocky Mountains, and found this a good world to live in if you knew how to work.

We were reviewing his experiences one day. I said:

"You have omitted to mention a great advantage that you started with and have kept."

"What 's that?" he asked.

"Money. You never had to work for your living. You were free to indulge your bent, your theological-evangelical-scientific bent, free to help your soul and work for the souls of others, without having to think about bills, or grind your powers for the taskmaster, Debt!"

"Moody had n't a dollar when he began his work in Chicago," said Drummond. "See what he did!"

"Moody was a genius. He made a business success before he gave himself to religious work. He had proved his greatest power — the management of men. You or I would have had to grapple with theology, or geology, or to swim in ink, once we had started and had been left to ourselves."

"Perhaps."

"No doubt about it. A poor man can be a theologian, or a follower of science, but he can't be both, and explore the Rocky Mountains and Darkest Africa, and conduct soup kitchens in Glasgow, and do a two-years tour with Moody and Sankey."

"That aspect had n't occurred to me. I am glad I was not compelled to have it occur to me," said Drummond.

"A man needing money and unable to get it is like a machine without lubricating oil. Almost any man who has done much without money could have done more with it," I said.

"You think so?"

"Are we to think that friction is the best result?"

"No," Drummond answered.

"Some men can't make money because their work does n't run to it, or they may have the ability, but not the desire, or they may not be able to afford to make money; you remember Agassiz's case. Perhaps he did n't need it."

"Money-making is a special faculty," said Drummond. "A man has it or does n't have it, as he may or may not have a musical ear, an eye for colour, a delicate sense of smell, and so on. I know moneyed men, and I daresay you know others, who are duffers outside their special lines. Most men are duffers outside their special lines."

"The defect of specialised training, eh?"

"Possibly: like over-specialisation in the trades."

"Cutting threads on screws for thirty years," said I.

"Shall we say the same thing of theology? Most men may overtrain in that."

"They do. Therefore try mixing science with it."

"That must dilute theology. A little too much science, and the theology becomes watery. But in the Roman Church they dilute the science."

"Don't you think it depressing to listen to Carnegie's cant about his intention to die poor?" I asked. "What else could he do? He says nothing about *living* as a poor man. Poverty is a 'blessing' that we all recognise in essays, sermons, and speeches, but we use all the strength we can to avoid the blessing, and we don't delude the poor with our

pretences. All of us like to use money as a force. Perhaps you would call it a mode of motion."

"That sounds like Moody," said Drummond. "There 's the other side," he went on, "the deadly monotony of the lives of the average rich folk, deadly monotony, a weary existence dragged along without any interest in useful things. Take an interest in things; that is the way to live; not merely think about them. No man has a right to postpone his life for the sake of his thoughts. This is a real world, not a think world. Treat it as a real world — act!"

"That is from your 'Programme of Christianity'," said I.

"Yes. The might of those who build is greater than the might of those who retard."

We got to talking about socialism. "Its basis," he said, "is materialism, not man. Herbert Spencer said: 'By no political alchemy can you get golden conduct out of leaden instincts.' And that 's a good standard for testing politicians. None better."

Drummond was always looking at the bright side of life, illuminating it with common sense. And he loved a joke as well as anybody. He told with gusto of the fun he had at the Chicago Exhibition when, one evening, a dozen Arabs and Turks strode through the grounds, gazing gravely at the marvels of that western civilisation.

"Marvellous," he repeated. "We shall never see anything like it again. Nor like those Arabs. If you could have seen them, as they passed from light to darkness at an exit gate, while, choking

with laughter, they removed the sheets and pillow cases, and silk handkerchiefs, and colored tablecloths which had served them as robes and turbans and sashes, you would have said they were as marvellous as anything in the show. And when they wiped the colour from their faces, you would have recognised several of the most learned professors in America and one Scotsman with a smudge on his cheek." He roared at the recollection.

He was a professor at twenty-five. And his pupils were university graduates studying for the ministry. It was part of their duty to study natural science, to know something about the world they would preach in and the stupidity of trying to dig science out of Scripture. Well, Drummond was the man for his work. And besides natural science, his work was for philanthropy and a rousing, liberalising evangelicism. At the end of his week in the classroom he would run over to Edinburgh and hold a religious service with a thousand young men attending earnestly.

"How do you get into personal touch with your college students?" I asked him.

"There you touch a tender point," he said. "There is n't enough personal touch in the colleges of Scotland! We put too much faith in lectures. Young men come but rarely into personal touch with their professors. I knew very little of mine. And that 's the rule. A man must break through the routine; the professor must, the student must. Personal touch would open both of them. Take So-and-So at the University. He lectures in the

morning to one hundred and fifty or two hundred students. In the afternoon to two hundred more. No personal touch in that; no opportunity for it. Youth can't be taught in droves, or saved in masses. And yet, if you go in for individual development, or by small groups, you multiply the work beyond all possibility. Our system is wrong. It neglects character for the sake of competition. But what can be done? Effort, individual effort, is the only thing worth a bawbee. All the rest is formulæ."

He said that, as far as his own efforts went, he did what he could, in every way that he could. The development of personal responsibility was what he drove at. "That 's the aim and end of life. If you don't base education on it, what is the use of education? Come. We are responsible for our physical condition. Let 's go for a walk!"

Even in Scotland there are moments without rain. Pallid things that might have been stars peeped through the scudding clouds. We walked on, with good, easy strides, and talked, — talked of patriotism for one thing. "We don't have to teach that in Scotland," he said. "We take it for granted. Every Scot is born with it. And there 's no immigration in Scotland. We 're luckier than you, in America, where you have — what is it? A million a year pouring through the steerages? I asked about that in my visits, but could n't find that you were teaching patriotism, except by fits and starts, in widely separated places. They were talking of teaching it there in the schools. What a funny idea! School is n't the place to acquire pa-

triotism. Home is! But where you have immigration on a huge scale the conditions differ, I confess."

The talk swung over to Gladstone. Drummond was very friendly with him. I had said that I thought the G. O. M. a vindictive old gentleman. Drummond laughed: "Oh, but we worship him. We take him very seriously."

"Yes, and he illustrates your favourite theory about taking an interest in things."

"Right! He is interested in things — movements, tendencies of thought, theology, religion, literature. I can't, though, quote him as an authority on science. But his interest, his active interest in things, keeps him fresh and young, and out of grooves. He is interested in things, in masses, nations, races, mountain ranges, literature, not art — literature above all, theological literature most of all."

"In Home Rule but not in Home Rulers," I interrupted.

"Does not the greater include the less?"

"Sometimes," said I, "but in politics it does not include even what is set down in black and white. Where would you put Gladstone as compared with your other hero, Moody? Moody, you say, was the biggest human being you ever knew."

"I won't retract that. Gladstone throws a greater spell over his hearers, and, when one meets him, an incomparable fascination. Moody's influence will last the longer, and so will his work."

This was interesting, to say the least of it. Then we turned home.

Four years later, Drummond died. Only forty-five!

CHAPTER XIII

SIR HENRY IRVING

Too much is said about the evanescent nature of an actor's fame. Is it so evanescent? Or are we believing, according to habit, merely what we have been told? Burbage's fame has lived as long as Queen Elizabeth's, and that is long enough. Suppose the Great Queen's fame eventually should chance to live longer than that of her subject, what is there evanescent about the latter since it has lived already through the three hundred years which separate us from his death? Betterton's fame may yet outlive that of the sovereigns under whom he flourished, — Charles II, William and Mary, and Queen Anne. What reason have we to suppose that it will not? Betterton's name has been one of the highest, most honoured names in England for two centuries and a half. Garrick's fame has lived as long as Doctor Johnson's, and Garrick had no Boswell. Mrs. Siddons is as well known to-day as, say George III, and more favourably known. Talma's fame has not been eclipsed by Napoleon's. Of Rachel we know as much as of the Empress Josephine. It is easier to tell offhand who was a famous actor one hundred and fifty years ago than

to say who was Prime Minister at the same time. Plunket was a greater orator, by all accounts, than Gladstone or Canning, Disraeli or Bright. Tell me — without looking him up in a Book of Reference — who was Plunket? Who were the chancellors of exchequer during Henry Irving's reign? Who were the leaders of the House of Commons? How long must fame last to satisfy all reasonable requirements? The names of how many princes, generals, preachers, statesmen, survive their deaths a hundred years?

An actor's fame, however short it may be, is long enough. How long has the fame of Roscius lasted? An actor has more than fame. He has the public's affection, its money, its applause, its cheers. And he has these nightly, besides the name that lingers after death. How will you prove now that Macready's name is less well known than Macaulay's? Are you safe in asserting that Edmund Kean's name will not add another century to its credit? Or Kemble's name? What reason is there for assuming that Byron's will live longer than that?

Even if the art of acting die, and the acted drama with it, overwhelmed by the cinema, it does not follow that the names and memories of the great players who have already lived will perish the more quickly. We may cherish them with a lively curiosity as the eminent practisers of a lost art, cherish them, in fact, because we are no longer able to replace them. The cinema could never have given us Sir Henry Irving, or the Kendals, the Bancrofts, or John Hare, or Edwin Booth, or Joseph Jefferson, or

Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson. No, not if it unreeled to a million spectators an hour, and its daily receipts exceeded the transactions at the Bank of England!

It is something to have lived till the second decade of the twentieth century turns the corner, and find that Irving still glows in the memory, Irving and the Lyceum nights. That glow makes the generation which has it richer than the generation which has it not. The Lyceum with Irving was as different from anything now known to London as was all Europe before the war. You cannot make the generation that is pressing on behind understand this. Words cannot do it. Moving pictures cannot do it. Imagine a motion picture of "To be or not to be"!

There was once an art of acting. It is used now chiefly by politicians. But if their parts are more important, their presentation of them is less interesting than that of Irving and Ellen Terry, and the others mentioned here. And it is of no importance at all to art. The politicians will be remembered only for the troubles they bring to us and to posterity; the actors are still remembered for the enjoyment they brought.

We who saw Irving through his long reign know what the world lost in losing him, for we seek through the world and find nothing to take the place of that sovereign and his achievements, nothing at this day to suggest them even remotely. The lack is a gap in life.

Will the gap ever be filled again? I doubt it. What chance is there of filling it? To begin with,

they tell us every day that public taste does not run in that direction. It really does not seem to do so, that is certain. And as the survivors of an older tradition die, their tradition dies with them. Tradition means more to the theatre than it means to other callings. Irving died in 1905. His tradition cannot be revived, that is clear. And it required traditions unbroken for nearly three hundred years to make the conditions for him. Broken now, for the first time in three centuries, who shall replace them? And how? It may never be done. I do not say that it never will be done, but I do say that all the conditions of modern entertainment are against it. And the generation which furnishes the majority of the playgoers of to-day does not care a button. It is their affair, after all. And they cannot take from us what we have had.

Irving was a kingly possession. He was as much a national figure as any statesman, or painter, or warrior, or popular personage of his time. He was a great man, and he worked to noble ends. No one could be in his presence without the consciousness of being in the presence, under the spell, if you like, of a great man. If one appreciates him more since his death, it is because the world is so much the poorer for his absence. We cannot say: "The King is dead; long live the king." There is no king. There is not even a pretender.

Irving's declamatory moments were often queer, but his handwriting was always almost the worst in the world. It was almost as bad as Horace Greeley's. I have letters from him which I cannot read to-day.

I have forgotten what they were about and appear to have kept no key to their mystery. But I connect with them pleasant recollections, for they never concerned anything that Irving wanted for himself, but always something that he wanted to do for somebody else, — an invitation to the play for some distinguished visitor from my own country, a supper in the Beefsteak Rooms, a Sunday up the river, or something of the kind. If, at the time, the hieroglyphics were indecipherable and could be associated with no known subject, I would take the letter to my neighbour, Bram Stoker, Irving's business manager and *Fidus Achates*, and adroitly prevail upon him for a translation. Usually, though, the letter from Irving would be followed, next post, by one from Stoker who would say: "The Chief tells me that you have kindly consented to so-and-so, or will bring So-and-So, or ask This-and-That; do you mind my suggesting Thus-and-So?"

Stoker's handwriting was almost as cryptic as Irving's, but not quite. It could be read by due perseverance. And, at the worst, one could always know who wrote the first letter because Irving's signature was like a flight of stairs, and Stoker's — well, it was different. Whether Stoker followed up all the letters of his Chief with a translation I cannot say, and now that he has followed his Chief Out Beyond there is no one who can decipher the few remaining letters and so revive in my memory incidents which I am sure were charming and in every way delightful. I must get on without the letters.

I saw the beginning and the end of Irving's man-

agement of the Lyceum Theatre, and nearly all the brilliant achievements between the beginning and the end. Management! It was more than a management; it was an august and splendid reign! It lasted more than twenty years; it made victorious expeditions to America; it seemed likely to end only with his life. And it did end only with his life. But the Lyceum, which he had made his home, which indeed he had made the chief temple of the drama in the English-speaking world, passed from his control as the nineteenth century died. He made valiant efforts to restore his kingdom, but the Fates prevailed against him. He went to Drury Lane for a while, but it was not *his* place, not *his* temple, not the centre to which *he* had drawn the world. He reigned now, but did not govern. He felt the change. Misfortunes had pressed upon him hotfoot. The splendour and pomp had vanished; he withdrew from London; he became a king in exile; he died in the provinces. They gave him a stately funeral in Westminster Abbey. If they had supported him as liberally in his final years as they had in his prosperous ones, I would not be inclined to scoff as I do sometimes when the Londoners flatter themselves on their loyalty to old favourites. And Irving would not have died, as I think he died, with a broken heart. But he was valiant and upstanding to the end.

A public loyalty that can last twenty years is indeed marvellous at any time. The marvel is the more interesting in Irving's case. He served his public with all his power. They knew that. They

were conscious, I suppose, of Irving's limitations, but I am not sure that he himself was conscious of them. At any rate, his limitations set no bounds to his endeavours. And he achieved everything, — great fame, adulation, financial success; he was more honoured than any other actor of his century; his life was dignified, his death became the man. But what a marvel it was that this man could have become renowned among great actors!

He could not conquer his mannerisms, or he did not. The spectators had to do that, or ignore them. His mannerisms were dropped between the spectator and the performance like a veil. It was a thin veil, but none the less a veil. You saw him through the veil. Suddenly the veil would rise, there would be no mannerism; as suddenly it would fall. And you heard him through strange obstacles. He could not walk, on the stage, without frequently strutting. Sometimes he did not talk, on the stage, without mouthing, marring the King's English. If he had learned, he had not mastered the elements of his calling. The elements mastered him. He had not the strength for what are called "sustained flights" of passion. And yet he would thrill you. There were times when he thrilled you with the suggestion of his meaning, rather than with the expression of it.

It is a commonplace of dramatic criticism to assert that there is not, and that there cannot be, such a thing as intellectual acting, because acting is concerned wholly with emotions. But Irving proved that what is impossible for the critics was possible

for him. There were three aspects of any character he played which never could escape the appreciation of an audience: the inner character, his conception of it — the soul, if you will; the meaning of the man, if you will not — that was the first aspect. The second was the picturesque aspect. Irving was always picturesque. He understood the appeal to the eye. Graceful he could not be, but he was always picturesque and always in the picture. The third aspect was the dramatic, the action through his personality. He could and did express every dramatic instant, every meaning, expressed them somehow, — by flashes of the mind, by movement, by simple gesture, by accentuation of line, by lights, by shades. It was acting illuminated by intellect. Whatever he did had behind it a powerful and searching mind, and you came to regard it for its operations. And your admiration of him, if you did admire him, was intellectual rather than emotional.

You liked him, or you disliked him. There was no halfway. I am speaking of him now as an actor, not as an actor-manager. When I first saw him, I thought him the worst actor there could be in the world. I was young then, but I had seen much fine acting, great acting. I had grown almost to manhood under the great art of Edwin Booth. Hamlet was the first part I saw Irving play. I suppose that, even then, I knew the lines almost as well as Irving himself. I thought he was speaking Choctaw, or Yorkshirese. His vowels confounded him. They confused me. The effect was distressing. After Hamlet I had seen him, during '79, in revivals of

"Richelieu" (which did not impress me much), "Charles I" (which did impress me), "Eugene Aram", "The Bells", and one or two other parts. It was on November 1, 1879, that he produced "The Merchant of Venice." This was the first of the "great productions" at the Lyceum under his management. His reign actually began then, for then he began fully to exercise his powers. The Tubal scene revealed all Irving's defects; they stood between his Shylock and my eyes and ears; they barked at me, jumped at me like grotesque manikins; I sympathised with the old lady who is reported to have said, after an hour of Irving's Hamlet: "Does that young man come on often? If he does, I 'll go home!"

But there were other moments which denied the Tubal scene altogether. That was forgotten as if it never had been. Shylock grew under your eye, inner man and outer man. The presentation of the entire play felt the magic of the poet-author, the poetic powers of the manager. I began to understand what Irving was — the actor-manager with a poetic spirit.

Possibly the full impact of the shock of his strange personality had worn down its effects by this time. And I had come to know London better. I had had a year of it, and in that time had heard all there was to hear about Irving. His name and his doings were talked of everywhere; the Lyceum, where he had acted several years under Bateman's management, had become a British institution; and Irving was as much talked of, everywhere, as the Prince of Wales,

Mr. Gladstone, or the weather. Discussion of his mannerisms was inevitable at any dinner party or afternoon tea. Burlesques of him were frequent, imitations of him were part of the stock-in-trade of weary comedians and gifted amateurs. But, in spite of all the skits and all the laughter, every one respected the man and his work, and knew he was a genius.

When his Shylock came, the awkwardness of the actor was concealed by the costume, or what was not so concealed became apparently characteristic of the Jew. If the Tubal scene showed him almost tone-bound and muscle-bound, the other scenes found him free of many of his afflictions.

Actor-manager with the poetic spirit! Those Lyceum nights were quite Arabian. How fully I realise that as I look back upon them more than forty years after. The pit nights at the play were the best nights I ever knew at the play, wherever the pit, but not, it must be acknowledged, whatever the play. When I ceased to be a pitite, and my connections with the press thrust me a few feet nearer the footlights, half the pleasure of theatre-going vanished, never to return. What had been a joyous zest became plain duty which had to be fulfilled whatever the conditions. As a pitite one went to the play for the fun of the thing; as a stallite he went in quest of "copy." As a pitite one had the pleasure of anticipation. Even the fatigue of waiting hours at the doors, and going without dinner, had compensations; one knew that at least he had capacity for endurance. One had, in brief, enthu-

siasm. One does not have enthusiasm in the stalls, or does not display it. In the pit he lets it loose. There is nothing so contagious as an expressed enthusiasm for a thing, or against it. And the pitite is always conscious of the fact that man is a gregarious animal. The stallite has forgotten this, if ever he knew it. He may not prefer segregation, but he is the victim of it. The usages are stronger than his feelings. The pitite's feelings come first. That is why the pit is important to the London actor, whatever it may be to the box office.

I have mentioned the first night of Irving's "Merchant of Venice." That was November 1, 1879. I was in the very front of the crowd that waited five hours in the old covered passage that led up from the Strand. There were no *queues* in those days. Only the strong faced that struggle at the doors. You stood hours in the swelter, and then when the bolts were heard thrusting back from their rings, you thrust yourself back against the crowd, which surged and pressed behind you, and was pressed again by the less fortunate beings in the distant rear. The tactical manœuvres consisted in avoiding the door frame while you clung to your half-crown and leaned heavily against your neighbour who was hurled against your ribs. The strategy was to know which half of the door opened first and direct / opposite the hole behind which the ticket seller stood ready for action. If you lowered your arms you were helpless in the crowd. The art was to hold them in front of you, breast high, with your half-crown clenched in your left hand, because that was

nearer the box office. If you put your hand in your pocket, you were lost, the crowd would rush you aside. If you muddled for change, they roared at you. Your left hand slapped your half-crown on the ledge, your right snatched the pit-check which slid across to you; you ran past the ticket collector, shoving the check into his hand and, making a sharp turn to the left, dashed along the benches until you came to the middle of the pit, and then went over the tops of bench-backs until you had captured your place in the centre of the front row! You had won the best place in the house! A barrier separated you by half an inch from the last row of the stalls. You were cheek by jowl with the mighty. You saw the celebrities of London arrive, you heard them chat; you saw them make others uncomfortable as they uncomfortably squeezed their way to their seats (for the Lyceum stalls were set closely) and as they entered your neighbour would tell you who they were, or you would tell him.

It was in the pit of London's theatres that I first came to know the London crowd, to understand it, to share its enthusiasms, or the reverse. It was in the Lyceum pit that I came to know how the crowd adored Irving, the place Ellen Terry had in its heart, and the place traditions held in the heart of the pit. Are there such pitites now, I wonder, as there were thirty and forty years ago?

Those first nights with the first favourites dissolved my American notions of the British character. I had heard, with the rest of the outer world, that the British were stolid, phlegmatic, cold, and what not,

that they repressed their emotions, that they would not and could not let themselves go. I was to find what everybody finds, sooner or later, — that the individual and the mass differ as chalk from cheese. The pit crowds were not icebergs; they had not the immobility of mountains. They laughed, they wept, they cheered; they unlocked their emotions. They were the most sentimental, the most enthusiastic, the most appreciative crowds I had ever seen. The individual was dissolved in the mass. He became natural man. The crowds always took fire from a spark. They received their favourites as if they were conquering heroes. Irving, their greatest favourite, they received like a reigning monarch. One has to learn this about the British; their hearts are big and near their skins, and that is why, as individuals, they armour them.

If you know how to touch them, they respond with such demonstrations of devotion, of enthusiasm, of loyalty, as no other race ever equals in our time. Their loyalty to Irving they expressed with a zeal that was greater even than their appreciation of his powers, immense as that appreciation was. They loved the man. He embodied for them another lofty mark in the records of English achievement. He was great and would be greater by the integrity, the persistence, the elevation of his purpose. Such qualities win the English, and deep is the loyalty with which England rewards them. That, at all events, was true in the Victorian days.

There was a blessed vision called Ellen Terry, in those far-away Lyceum nights. Her power was

charm. And she wielded her power almost to the end of King Henry's reign. In comedy she was alluring, audacious, delightful, — as Portia, for instance; as Beatrice; as any number of arch, graceful, incomparable creatures. In tragedy, — well, we forgave her the tragedies, her Lady Macbeth, for example. As Ophelia there was nothing to forgive; as Juliet — here was the exception to her tragic parts; she was a poet's dream, a fragile, loving, playful thing enmeshed by fate and borne down to death. Ellen Terry was the witching consort of Irving's reign. She won half his battle. "A star danced, and under that" she "was born." When Father Time told her that she could not play Portia and Beatrice and Juliet any more, half the attractiveness of the Lyceum was gone, and Irving had to carry the load alone.

But I have wandered far from the first night of "The Merchant of Venice." It was a great occasion. "Everybody" was there. To my gratified eyes the audience was nearly as interesting as the play and the players. Celebrities were "as plenty as blackberries." Now forty years have gone, and the celebrities have gone with them. And the nonentities, too. Of the two thousand or more persons who saw the performance that night, it may be that not more than fifty survive.

There is no one in these days to rouse us as we were roused in the late seventies and to the end of the century. The playgoer of to-day is fed on other stuff, on experiences quite unlike those his predecessors knew. And he is not fed so well. He is

growing up, or has grown up, without standards. All 's fish that comes to his net. I wonder what he would think of Irving if, by miracle, Irving could return to the Lyceum with undiminished powers, with Ellen Terry as she was in the eighties, and all the galaxy and circumstance that surrounded them? I think the playgoer of the present would scarcely notice Irving's mannerisms of speech, of gesture, of gait, he has seen so many mannerisms almost equally quaint, heard so much speech that is quite as queer.

What caused Irving's mannerisms? For the life of me I cannot tell. They were not always with him. They grew upon him with the seasons. I do not think he affected them. He was too honest, too sincere for affectations. Besides, he did not need them to attract attention. And they injured his work. They were not caused by physical defects. They were entirely absent when he was not acting. Then his movements and speech were easy, pleasing. His manner had great dignity. I have said that his mannerisms were not with him in all characters, nor at all times. Intensity might bring them out. Declamation did so almost invariably. But they could not be relied upon either for coming or for going. What caused them? Self-consciousness perhaps, nervousness possibly. But why should he be self-conscious or nervous in his own theatre, where he played every night, and show no trace of either when he spoke at a university, or a dinner, or a public meeting? Why should he walk naturally and with ease in Bond Street, and with constraint, as if he were rheumatic, as Hamlet, at Elsinore, and why

should he speak with perturbed vowels when he was in costume, and in easy control of them when in ordinary dress? The questions are easily asked; they have never been answered. If I have dwelt upon his peculiarities, it is partly because no one could ignore them, but mainly because he was so great a man that we can measure his powers by the obstacles against which he contended. His peculiarities of speech and motion may have been the causes which retarded his advancement for so many years. And, by the way, he was born in Somersetshire. Perhaps it was the Somersetshire dialect that cropped out at times in his delivery.

Irving's maltreatment of vowels gave much offence to trained ears. I do not know when I ceased, if ever I did cease, to wince at some of his pronunciations, but with time they ceased to present themselves as crimes for scourging, and came to be regarded as misfortunes, as penalties that must be endured for seeing him and enjoying him. When all is said, this thought remains, — the Lyceum productions were immensely satisfying; the beauty of them, the appeal to the eye, the appropriateness of everything that was painted, or woven, or said, or done; the groupings, the general and particular movement, whether of principals or supernumeraries, the tone of the thing, the atmosphere of it. When was the like known before? When since?

Seeing through the fog of mannerism took me a year. After that, as I have said, I grew gradually to appreciate him, to admire him. When I made

his acquaintance, ten years after first seeing his Hamlet, I had long passed from the benches of opposition. But even then the wonder grew. First it had been: how did this man of many mannerisms ever become an actor and one of the most distinguished actors of his time? And then it was: how does he escape from carrying his mannerisms into private life? For he did not carry them there. He was a natural, unaffected gentleman, distinguished in bearing, courteous, fine in dignity, without pose. He walked and talked like a human being accustomed to the best of intellectual society, accustomed, indeed, to the ruling of men. He was then neither tone-bound nor muscle-bound. He moved with a certain ease, spoke with exquisite courtesy and quiet, and did not speak too much. He preferred to listen rather than to talk. He could — and did — make excellent speeches after dinner, or before the curtain. They would always have a touch of humour and a touch of pathos. They would always be in earnest. He never spent himself on trivial things; he never trifled about anything.

He had a certain air of authority; he had, at any rate, earned the right to breathe it. Besides, it protected him from bores. It made him, as a listener, the more gracious by just the suggestion of deference to an opinion, especially when he had invited the opinion. He preferred flattering to being flattered. Perhaps discreet flattery was an instrument that he knew how to employ better than most men. It may have been on that account that

when it came his way he did not care for it. In all things he preferred giving to receiving.

Next to his work he enjoyed hospitality, that is, the exercise of hospitality. He did not like going out, and very seldom went out to dinners and receptions, those affairs of which one grows weary in London, because there are so many of them, and the celebrity is so often a sacrifice. He enjoyed being the host. This gave him the right of selection, with the minimum of sacrifice.

And what a host he was! You saw him at his best then, I think, his Majesty in evening dress, presiding at his table, after the play. You had seen him crowned and robed and reigning, heard him cheered by his loyal subjects, the British public, and now you were to sup with him after the play. His guests — they might be two, or six, or a dozen — would be shown to a suite of historic rooms upstairs behind the scenes, the rooms which in the eighteenth century and later had belonged to The Sublime Society of Beefsteaks. Perhaps, that night, the play had finished at eleven. The green curtain seldom fell earlier at the Lyceum. In fifteen or twenty minutes Irving would come in. If Miss Terry were coming, she would be later. An actress is usually longer than an actor about "changing." But whether she came, or not, and she would not always come, the feast would be a memorable one, both as to company and to dishes, to coffee and cigars and wines.

In those days teetotalism did not stalk over the world, and arrogantly claim all the virtues, and cry

tyrannically, "You shall not touch wine! There are weak souls who cannot drink without drunkenness. To protect them we shall deprive you!" A lot of kindly feeling has vanished with the rise of Bolshevism, Syndicalism, and Teetotalism. Are we coming to a time when Shaving will be forbidden because razors are dangerous? If there are people who drink to excess, are there none who eat excessively? Are dyspepsia and indigestion to reduce the world to a common level of sallowness and pain, to the pangs and palenesses that prevail in teetotal regions? What has all this to do with Henry Irving? Nothing, of course, seeing that he died in 1905. But were he living and in his prime, I can fancy him saying, as many another man is saying: "No more America for me. They won't let me have a pint of wine with my dinner. I believe in freedom."

Irving's first nights were famous for their supper parties. These were not given in the Beefsteak Rooms but on the stage. The stage would be cleared after the play, and at long tables, at the rear of it, the guests would help themselves, and stroll about, smoking, talking, munching chicken sandwiches and salad, and sipping champagne, claret, or whatever was going. There would be two or three hundred guests, possibly more, men and women titled and untitled, well known in politics, science, letters, art, and social leaders, generals, and admirals, an epitome of that world which is London. It would be one of the most enjoyable receptions of the season. Wearied with conversation and stand-

ing about, the guests would begin to disperse about one or half-past one in the morning. By two o'clock, usually, nearly all of them would be gone. Then some one would find a few chairs, and half a dozen of us would sit in a corner talking, and presently Irving would join us, and the talk would gain in weight and point. About three o'clock, I think it was seldom earlier, we would start homeward. Frequently Irving and I would go together. My hansom would drop him at the door of his chambers in Grafton Street, and then I would go on to Chelsea. But whether on first nights, or on other nights, this was our custom for ten years, a custom broken only by my increasing absences from London. I might be in New York or Washington, or Rome, but Irving would know somehow, and we would exchange wires on first nights. On his first night in the World Beyond, I was farther away than usual. I was in Chicago. I wondered, when I heard, next morning, that he had gone, whether he missed the little group that used to foregather with him, and what hansom had conveyed him after his life's drama, and who had accompanied him Home. Always he had seemed to me a lonely man. He was a generous man and a great one. And his fame will last as long as the English stage retains its fame.

CHAPTER XIV

HENRY M. STANLEY

STANLEY was the most self-contained man imaginable, when he chose to be. And when he chose to be otherwise, his anger was terrific. He had a hard face and steely-cold grey eyes. Neither eyes nor face revealed what he felt, if he wished to conceal feeling. I have seen him quite unmoved, rock-like, when, after an African expedition, he met devoted friends, or faced a cheering multitude, or drove his way through an angry mob. All was one to him if he had to get anything, or go anywhere, or do anything. None the less he felt, and his feelings were deep, but he held them in the closest grip. But when his temper blazed you wanted to call out the engines. He could not tolerate blunderers and fools; he had no patience with reformers, nor with sentimentalists; and very little with Emin Pasha, whom he came to regard as possessing the "mushy" qualities. Perhaps I should say that he had a great deal of patience with Emin Pasha in view of the fact that Emin, while willing to be found, did not wish to be "rescued", and so Stanley had his aches and pains and hardships for his trouble. It is possible to sympathise with him.

Stanley returned to London in April, 1890, after

the Emin Expedition. There were crowds to greet him in the streets, and a big crowd at the railway station. I went, with an old friend of his, to meet him at the train. We had special cards to the platform at which the train would arrive, and were fortunate enough to secure places at the point where Stanley's saloon carriage stopped. There were about five hundred holders of similar cards, I should think, and among them the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who was a very old friend of Stanley. When the train pulled in, the privileged five hundred broke ranks with a rush and a roar and a waving of hats and handkerchiefs. The crowd beyond the platform barriers took up the cheering. As everybody on the platform knew the Baroness by sight, a path to Stanley was promptly cleared for her, and immediately the explorer advanced and shook hands with the kindly old lady. But he did not smile. He was as grim as a statue. He lifted his hat two or three times to the crowd, but he scarcely looked at it. He seemed in no way elated or touched by the popular greeting, but I suppose he was touched.

As soon as he saw the Baroness, he removed his hat, carrying it in his left hand, and stepping forward quickly, held out his right. But he did not speak; nor did she. Her kind old face quivered a little, and there were tears in her eyes. Perhaps if she had spoken, she would have shown too much emotion. Stanley, I thought, realised this, and was silent. But he kept the old lady's hand in his and shook it a little every instant or so, while he looked out over the mass of faces beyond. When he recognised

any one standing near him, he nodded, but said never a word; he would look again at the venerable lady, and give her hand another little shake, and then, when all was ready, he gave her his arm and escorted her to her carriage, her husband following. The three entered the carriage, and Stanley stood up, bareheaded, and bowed to the cheering crowd. But never a word spoke he.

Out of the station they drove amid a din of cheering, but still he maintained his silence. One of them told me afterwards that he was silent until they reached their door in Stratton Street, Piccadilly. All the way the crowds cheered. Sometimes, when the roar was unusually loud, he would lift his hat. Then, when the spectators saw that his close-cut hair had turned white, they would double their cheers. I don't know what men think about when they experience such moments. I have asked many who have had them. They seemed to think that they were gratified, or puzzled, or stunned. I can imagine Stanley asking himself: "When can I get out of this?" But his face might have been the face of a graven image, — say a Sphinx from the sands of North Africa.

The next time I saw him in public was at St. James' Hall, about a week later, when he addressed an audience invited by the Emin Pasha Relief Committee. It was a ribboned and jewelled audience; it was composed of royalties, nobilities, famous commoners and fighting men, diplomats who sparkled and bishops who did not, men of letters, men of science and art, not to mention their radiant ladies,

an audience which literally shone, for the affair was an "occasion." The Prince of Wales (afterward King Edward VII) presided; his Princess and the present King sat in the front row. If I were to give a list of "among those present" it would exhaust pages of "Debrett" and "Who's Who", to say nothing of my own pages. The Emin Pasha Relief Committee had done the thing handsomely, as well they might, for this was Stanley's first public appearance since his return from the expedition of which the world babbled long. It was all in the day's work for him. He never turned a hair. He was in command of that audience, he told it what he wished to tell it, quietly, resolutely, and his words went home. They would have thought he addressed such audiences every night. But he had spoken in circumstances far more difficult.

At the proper moment he took his manuscript in hand and walked to the edge of the platform. When the audience had finished its applauding welcome, he looked about for a reading desk, or a table, on which he might put his papers. He seemed puzzled, and I daresay he was, that the committee of the occasion had not provided something of the kind. The Prince of Wales was quick to perceive his need, and picking up a small table that stood in front of his own chair, he carried it to Stanley and placed it in front of him. Then the explorer smiled, bowed, and thanked the Prince, and, turning to his audience, he fitted a pair of gold-bowed spectacles before his eyes and plunged at once into his address.

He told simply, directly, without oratorical flourishes, but as a courageous man to whom dangers were familiar, the story of that awful march into the heart of Africa. It was a famous march then. The world has since forgotten it, I daresay, having had, for years, its fill of deadly suffering. But it is worth remembering as a tale of heroism, and I am able to repeat here some of the passages which I preserved at the time. Stairs, and Parke, and Jephson, and Nelson, the surviving officers of his expedition, were with him on the platform.

The little religion that our Zanzibaris knew, said Stanley, was nothing more than legendary lore, and in their memories floated dimly a story of a land that grew darker and darker as you travelled toward the end of the world, and drew nearer to the place where a great serpent lay supine, coiled round the whole earth. And the ancients must have referred to this, where the light is so ghastly, where the woods are endless, and are so still and solemn and grey, to this oppressive loneliness amid so much life, this loneliness so chilling to the heart! And the horror grows darker with their fancies, the cold of early morning, the comfortless grey of the dawn, the dead white mist, the ever-dripping tears of the dew, the deluging rains, the appalling thunder-bursts. When night comes with its thick, palpable darkness, our Zanzibaris lie cuddled in their little damp huts, they hear the tempest, the growling of the winds, the grinding of the storm-tossed trees, the fall of granite, the shock of the trembling earth, the roaring and rushing as of a mad, overwhelming sea — and then the horror is intensified.

It may be, next morning when they hear the shrill sounds of the whistle, and the officers' voices ring

out in the dawn, and the blare of the trumpet stirs them to preparation and action, that the morbid thoughts of the night, and the memories of the terrible dreams, will be effaced for a time. But when the march has begun once again, and the files are slowly moving through the woods, they renew their morbid broodings and ask themselves: "How long is it to last?"

They disappear into the woods by twos and threes and sixes, and, after the caravan has passed, return to the trail, some to reach Yambruja, and upset the young officers with their tales of woe, some to stray in the dark mazes of the forest, hopelessly lost, some to be carved for the cannibal feast.

Those who remain, committed by fears of greater danger, mechanically march on, the prey to dread and weakness, the scratch of a thorn, the puncture of a pointed cane, the bite of an ant, the sting of a wasp. The smallest thing serves to start an ulcer, which becomes virulent and eats its way to the bone, and the man dies.

That self-contained man had been the leader in that march of death. Weeks, months, years of such fighting he had known, fighting not man but nature, a foe he could not strike in return. Sometimes man and his weaknesses aided the enemy, jolly black, or surly black fellows packed with superstitious fears. The voice of the demagogue was loud in England in those days, but not so loud as it is in these days. Stanley had been criticised harshly for his "treatment of the natives"; they were "our black brothers" and all the rest of it; he had even been criticised for making expeditions at all, since "only by black labour could expeditions go forward. What is there in it for the blacks?" There

were other mushy-minded objections similar to those employed by pacifists in these days. He had his own way of hitting back at the mollycoddles. They had been asking what he got out of the bold adventure. That is always the way. He turned to Stairs and Parke, Jephson and Nelson, and said quietly to his audience:

These men were volunteers. What did they "get out of it", save the dangers they sought, the sport which perhaps they found, such contribution to general and special knowledge as they might make, and their consciousness of duty performed? They are English gentlemen. Two of them are officers in the British Army. Mr. Jephson paid a thousand pounds for the privilege of accompanying the expedition. Captain Nelson left a comfortable home and the luxuries of civilised life for the sole purpose of joining in the rescue of one of Gordon's governors, whom the great soldier's untimely fate had left in a perilous position in the extreme south of the Soudan. These volunteers pledged themselves to be loyal and devoted, and I must confess, assuming that I am a sufficient judge, being naturally jealous of anything that is not downright and real, that they have redeemed their pledge in the noblest and completest manner.

Darkest Africa has been to them a fiery furnace, a crucible, and a question chamber, which they have tried, each of them to the very depths of their natures. They have borne every trial to which they have been subjected with more than Spartan, with old-English fortitude, the fortitude that existed before mawkishness and mock sentiment had made men maudlin. It is for you who hear me now to do your part toward recognising the merits of these young gentlemen, or causing them to be recognised

by those who have the power to dispense awards appropriate to noble and thorough and uncalculating performance of duty.

The gossips used to say, as if they took a peculiar pleasure in saying it, that Stanley did not recognise loyalty in others. But if the remarks just quoted were not recognition, and handsome recognition, given, as they were, before the most influential audience that could have been assembled in London, I do not know what recognition could possibly be.

Of all my memories of Stanley, the most amusing relates to the "American Dinner" given in London in his honour. It was not so amusing at the time, because that was a time of mishap and muddle. Apart from the fact that the name of America should be associated, not allied as Mr. Wilson would insist, with a mismanagement which seemed especially determined to prove false the tradition that Americans have a natural and trained capacity for getting things done, the thing was a roaring farce. There was a "Committee", of course, but the Committee had nothing to do with the arrangements. There were forty "Honorary Stewards", but I can vouch for the fact that the honorary stewards had nothing to do with the arrangements. I was one of the forty. The ebullient zeal of one man who undertook to do everything, and who welcomed the responsibility, because he was a friend of Stanley, was responsible for the general wreckage of the elaborate plans which promised a dinner of ceremony and resulted in an informal collation. I have always supposed that the kindly gentleman who undertook the whole

thing, and who was really one of the best fellows going, must have paid a good share of the cost of this entertainment to his friend Stanley, and insisted, therefore, upon having his own way, or the members of the Committee must have shirked their duties, which is n't likely, considering who they were.

Well, here was an American dinner to Stanley. There were sixteen speeches, save the mark! And eleven of the speakers were Englishmen. There must have been at least three hundred and fifty men at the dinner, and fully one half of them, possibly more, were not Americans. Not an American dish was served, and the caterers, whoever they were, did not serve the first course until an hour and a half, or something like that, after the dinner should have begun.

There was no one to receive the company. The chairman was there, but most of the guests arrived before he did. There was no reception committee. The honorary stewards had no badges or other marks to distinguish them from anybody else, and no searcher for a guide or for information knew who they were. There was no table plan, no list of guests. Nobody knew where he was to sit, or who would be his neighbours. We heard that the printer's forms had collapsed into horrible "pi" just at the point of going to press. Although, as an "honorary steward", I arrived a quarter of an hour before the time announced, I could find on the premises none of my companion honoraries, nor was any list of them available. I was talking with two

or three arrivals when a familiar voice behind me asked: "Are we alone in Africa?"

"It looks like it, Mr. Stanley," said I. "I can't find the huts, or the bones of the feast, or the chief of the tribe. But you have come to the rescue, as usual."

Stanley looked amused. "Where 's our friend ——? Have you seen him?" he asked.

I explained what I had heard about the dear fellow's dilemmas, and the little that I understood of them.

"Then we 'll have to work our passage," Stanley said. "Will it be all right if I stand here? I 'll have to meet everybody, I suppose. They won't fear I 'll bite 'em, will they, if there 's no manager to keep me tied up?"

And so it was to Stanley's good sense and his willingness to enter into the spirit of the thing that the affair got under weigh. But it was a long time in arriving anywhere. I saw Whistler put his head in at the door. I went after him and introduced him to Stanley. "I say," said Whistler to me, "are you stewarding? I 'm a steward, too. It 's all stew, is n't it? But I don't know what to do, do you? Is there anything to eat?"

"Not yet," said I.

"B-r-r-r-r-h! What 's that?" It sounded like a crash of china in an adjoining room.

"The end of all things, I should think," said Stanley. "I say, there 's the Duke! No Committee? Well, I 'll receive him."

"The Duke" was the Duke of Teck, the father

of the present Queen. In a minute he was followed by another Duke, Sutherland. And there were Stanley's chief officers, who were to share with him the honours of the evening. And very soon the rooms were filled. But nobody in authority appeared, or if appearing, no authority was exercised. For an hour and a half everybody stood about, accumulating hunger and getting very tired. And there was no one to say what was to be done, or when, or how.

At last somebody cried: "Gentlemen, dinner is served. This way, please, and sit where you like!"

We all cheered at this.

And so the royalties, and the guests of honour, and the orators of the evening followed the hungriest men who were nearest the doors, walked rapidly into the dining room, and took the first seats they could find. The affair had become a picnic. But there *was* a meal. That was the important thing. After famishing so long, we had a dinner of sorts. But there were sixteen speeches to follow! This fact we learned from the souvenir albums which we found at our plates. In the course of time the speeches began.

One of them issued, poured, from a New York lawyer who stood in a far corner, waving his arms and displaying vast expanses of shirt-cuff. He spread-eagled, he made the eagle scream, he Gods-countried till you could hear the corn grow. Nothing could stop him. He ran on till he ran down. And then the Grenadier Guards Band, Dan Godfrey

conducting, struck up the "Star Spangled Banner." That was another relief.

The American dinner to Stanley was given in the Portman Rooms in Baker Street. The Portman Rooms had formerly housed Madame Tussaud's Waxworks. Perhaps the hall in which we dined had been the Chamber of Horrors. I suspect it. At any rate, there was a general air of wonderment as to what might happen next. We would have liked the affair more if the Committee, or the Manager of All Things, had given less of his useful attention to souvenir albums and elaborate trophies, and more attention to the details of the evening. Some one had designed a large, costly, and elaborate silver shield, on which were to be depicted events in Stanley's career. It was to be presented with a flourish of trumpets, that is to say, a speech by the Consul-General. But the shield was unfinished, although on the spot, and some of the flourishes had to be omitted. If the table plans were omitted, somebody had managed to get up a list of guests, at the last minute. But that was incomplete, too. In that dim English way which robs men of their first names and puts them down with a single initial, even Cumberland, the mind reader, who was present, could not have guessed, without seeing him, that "H. Hunt" was Holman-Hunt, and not Helen, or Henry; that "H. White" was Henry White, the secretary of our Legation, and later Ambassador at Rome and Paris, still later the unabashed deliverer of a pro-German speech, and in the Wilsonic course of events, a member of the American Delegation

to the "Peace Conference" of 1918–1919. But so many names were disguised by the poverty of labour which denied them all connection with their owners that I must now deny them space on this page. I remember that "B. Harte" was Bret Harte, that "E. Gosse" meant Edmund Gosse, and I remember that "Prof. John S. Hopkins of Gilman University", as he appeared in the newspapers of the following morning, was really Professor Gilman of Johns Hopkins University. To this day the Briton persists in printing the name of that university "John S. Hopkins."

We wished to hear the speeches of Stanley and his officers, or, say, the remarks these gentlemen might make. Not a button did any one care for the other speeches, and the less we cared, the more they lapsed into oratory. We knew that Stanley and his men would give us plain talk over our cigars, and that is what they did. Some of Stanley's talk that night I can quote from a report that was made at the time. Did I give the date? It was May 30, 1890.

On a wintry afternoon, in 1867, just twenty-three years ago, I started from America for Africa, at the imperial command of one of the dollar-powers of America. I was as ignorant as a babe of the land I was going to. As I look back upon my stock of resources I am not unmindful that none could be poorer in what was fitting and necessary, but I possessed some natural store of good will, fondness for work, and a wholesome respect for the boss, the employer — the paying power. I learned down south what they mean by the saying "Root hog,

or die!" They mean if you don't work, you shan't eat. It 's another form of the scriptural saying: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread." In the America of my time they understood that.

In Abyssinia I acquired several lessons from English journalists, the most important being what chaff is, and the second — that black trousers in the daytime are not suitable. I learned, also, to distinguish good soldiers from bad, what kind of men made the best officers. . . . It takes longer to know an Englishman than to know any other Christian, or any pagan, that I ever came across. He does n't walk up to you, as the Yankee does, and pester you with questions about your private business and your conjugal experiences. He looks at you as if he did not care whether you lived or died, starved or rotted. Yet if you do him a little service, he is so grateful that he will remember it. Not effusive, like a Frenchman, nor gushing like a German, he does not regard you superciliously, as a Madrileno would, or look upon you as legitimate prey, as is the custom of the Greeks; but he has the knack of assuming a profound indifference to your existence.

I was sent to Spain to study Spanish war and politics. I discovered a defect, and I doubt greatly whether the Spanish leaders have yet become conscious of that defect. They could not execute the laws. They lacked the courage to do so. Therefore, the Republic, which could be sustained only by justice, was impossible.

It was necessary for me to wander further afield, to view cities and men, great works, great assemblies, many countries — Greece, Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, Russia, Persia, India, and then, after being well seasoned with experience, I entered Africa as a leader of men. According to the rules I was not

ripe, judging by what I now know and what less I knew then. I was still young and very rash, headstrong, I relied too much on force. Fortunately fate was propitious, I was not prematurely cut off.

Marching eighteen hundred miles into Africa, I had time to think. It was reflection I needed. Yet I was a dull pupil, and my blood was like molten lava. I must admit that while with Livingstone I saw no good in the lands I travelled through. The negro was precisely what he ought to be — a born pagan, a most unloving and unlovable savage. Nevertheless, much of what Livingstone expounded was unanswerable. I attempted to parry what he said by lavish abuse of the natives and their country.

In 1873 I was back again in Africa, on the opposite side of Africa, and after the brief Ashantee campaign, returned with a few more experiences.

The beginning of my real African education was in 1875 while sailing along the shores of the greatest lake in Africa. It came like a revelation to me.

Now I have shown you what a dull, slow, student I was. You can well understand how lightly the abuse and chaff of my brother journalists sit on my mind. For there were even duller and slower folk than I. It is not one lecture, or one speech, or even a hundred, that will suffice to infuse a knowledge of the value of Africa into the English mind. It took ten years for people to believe thoroughly that I did find Livingstone!

Only a few days ago one of the most prominent men in England said: "I do not know what you have been doing lately in Africa, Mr. Stanley, but if you are to lecture I will gladly go to hear you." And so I say that although in this assembly we may know what is going on in Africa, we must not suppose that the British public, or the journalism which is its reflection, is any wiser to-day than in the time of Mungo Park.

Rather neat scoring, I think. The world does not change much.

Stanley married and went into Parliament. One day I thought it might be interesting to see him try conclusions with an election crowd in London. He was contesting on the Surrey side of the river. I think it was in Lambeth. He got a new experience. The crowd heckled him, and tried to shout him down, just for the mere joy of living. But they could n't silence him. While they bellowed, he would stand calmly and look at them. After some minutes of this kind of thing, he managed to be heard.

"Is this my meeting or yours?" he asked. They were quite certain the meeting was their own. The interruptions were numerous. I was thinking what he would do with a mutinous lot in Darkest Africa, and presently he told them that the savages compared pretty favourably with "their white brothers in London"! The crowd yelled, but they could n't disconcert him. He finished his speech; cut it short, no doubt, but did n't appear to do so. Only the persons near him could hear what he said, there was so much noise. As he left the meeting, the gentle souls began to throw things. I saw them trying to overturn his carriage. His wife was in it!

Stones flew. But Stanley lived to fight again. Knowing him, I think I know how angry he really was.

"But," said he when we met again, "I longed for a few seconds of Africa! My education is n't completed yet. I am learning about British electioneer-

ing crowds. When they shout: 'Fair play, fair play', they mean 'Fair play for our side.' Come now, that 's a fact."

It is unnecessary that I should incriminate myself.

I never could see what satisfaction Stanley got from being a member of Parliament. In his heart he would have been glad, once or twice, to lead them all, Government and Opposition and their followers, into an African jungle — and lose them.

I see I have not mentioned that he became Sir Henry. But I knew him as Mr.

CHAPTER XV

GEORGE MEREDITH

A BRIGHT, warm, summer morning. I was working under pressure in my study in Cheyne Walk on an article which had to be finished that afternoon. Saturdays were my busiest days and this was Saturday, and only morning. The maid rapped at the study door and said, "Mr. John Burns to see you, Sir."

In came Burns, preceded by his great voice and hearty laugh, making apology for interruption. "Can you drop the work and come with me?" said he.

"Impossible," said I. "Sorry, but — "

"Well, I 'm off to George Meredith's," said he, laying a post card on my writing table. The post card was from Meredith, who appointed the meeting, and added:

"We 'll have a fine Radical day. Bring your friend."

"You are the friend," said Burns.

"I 'll come," said I. "Give me a quarter of an hour, and I 'll finish this article somehow." And so I made sacrifice to one of my gods, the god that dwelt on the sunny slope of Box Hill. The article

was brought to a quicker turn than it had dreamed of, a hansom was called; we rushed to Clapham Junction and took train for Burford Bridge.

It was more than a quarter of a century ago, but it seems like yesterday. And yet, though it was more than a quarter of a century ago, the Great Dock Strike had seemed so long before that it was almost forgotten. In the dock strike, that is to say, in 1889, I had made John Burns' acquaintance. He says I "discovered" him, discovered the real John Burns under the red-hot agitator who was expected to lead a hundred thousand men to incendiarism and the sack of London.

I do not remember the year which brought this Meredith day to our spinning world. But it must have been in the early nineties, and Burns on the London County Council, and perhaps for a session or so a member of Parliament. The date, however, does n't matter. If it were not 1892 it may have been 1893 or '94. Let 's get on.

Neither Burns nor I had ever met George Meredith. Burns and he had had some correspondence which resulted in the post card and our expedition to Box Hill that blossomy, fragrant morning when the England of dreams lay all about us, and the stream that ran by Burford Bridge "babbled o' green fields" and played with flowers.

We arrived at the little station in Surrey about noon. Whatever it may be now, it was then a little station. We strode off to Box Hill, and turned a corner, and there, trapping the sunshine, was Flint Cottage, George Meredith's home, at the bottom of

a sloping garden running over with roses. Roses, roses everywhere, and higher in the sloping garden, overlooking a valley that the gods had made for poets to dream in, was a little chalet where Meredith wrote, and slept, and had the muses to wait on him. To the chalet a gardener directed us when we asked for his master. We climbed the path. The chalet door stood partly open. Burns knocked on a rose trellis. "Come in!" cried a voice. In we went. There was George Meredith, in a Morris chair, with a rug over his knees, and sheets and sheets and sheets of manuscript over the rug. If he were to rise, the whole mountain of paper would tumble helter-skelter to the floor.

"No! don't move," said my companion. "I 'm John Burns." Then he introduced me.

"I knew you, John Burns, I knew you. Your photographs are like you. The voice is what I imagined it would be. Sit, gentlemen, sit. There, by the window. No better view in England, I really think. I comfort myself with it. It is good enough for parliament-men and our scribbling kind," said Meredith, smiling roguishly at me. The grasp of his hand was firm and generous. His voice had rich, deep tones. But he looked a fragile being.

"Like the schoolboy, I can say, 'This is n't writin', it 's readin','" and he pointed to the manuscript.

"Chapman and Hall-ing," I ventured to say.

"That 's right," said Meredith, "you see the slave bearing his burden."

If John Burns' photographs were faithful, so were Meredith's, or so was the one with which I had been

familiar. His beard and hair were grey, almost white then. He looked older than he was. He was only sixty-five. Only sixty-five, and I thought him old! He lived to be eighty-one. I liked his voice. I had been told that it was high and shrill. It was nothing of the kind. It was mellow, clear, and his speech was scholar-like, with quaint shafts of wit. They used to tell of his "artificial talk." I heard none of it. He was as natural as his roses. But there might be prickly thorns under the rose.

Meredith gathered his papers and put them aside. He leaned back in his big, comfortable chair, and said "now let 's talk" as another man might say "let 's have a drink." And we three sat, and talked and remade the world like a lot of youngsters. We knew better, each of us, knew that the dreams we were indulging would never be realised, that probably we would never call them up and look at them again — we would n't dare — they would be buried with us, no doubt. Some other youngsters might dream similar dreams by and by. No doubt they would. But to-day was to-day. And to-morrow I would be twice as old as Meredith, though half his years, and know in all my body half as much as his little finger knew. That very day he was the youngest of the three. He bubbled quietly, like champagne in a hollow-stemmed glass. The conversation capered. We might have been lads out of school, and we ragged the authorities. Meredith was the youngest and gayest of the three, Burns the most enthusiastic, and I came dragging on with not exactly timorous whoop-hurrahs! And it was

June, and high noon, with roses everywhere, and still more roses, and the humming of bees. And the big world was far away — a million miles.

It was "a fine Radical day" no doubt, in more than the limited political sense. Burns was the only political Radical of the three. He called me "a crusted Tory." I don't remember what he called George Meredith, who left us guessing, I think, as some of his printed pages were likely to do. Anyway, we did n't talk books. Life was better. And there was a lot of life to talk about yet, at the end of an age. Besides, our host was pressing us to stay to luncheon.

Down the garden path we strolled, still talking. Meredith said, as we seated ourselves at table: "I 'm here alone at present: you come like a rescuing expedition. This talk is a shower on parched land." After luncheon the talk went on, under trees, and tea-time had come before we knew it. After tea a walk over Box Hill.

You will have gathered by this time that the talking was not about Meredith or his books. He guided us from those high pastures where we would have liked to browse to the lower marshes where we might stumble as we pleased over politics, Home Rule and no rule, free trade and protection, dear food and cheap food, municipal administration, the housing of the poor, socialism, and all those everlasting puzzles which England is discussing now as she discussed them thirty years ago. They were very dear to John Burns. They seemed interesting to Meredith. He enjoyed talking another man's

shop; at any rate, he enjoyed talking Burns' shop so much that the talk scarcely touched on books. It may be mentioned at this point that John Burns, even at that time, owned probably more books than Meredith, and knew the insides of them. Whether or not he knew the insides of more books than did Meredith is another matter. Meredith, you know, was a publisher's reader.

I did manage, while we were at tea, to get in a word about "One of Our Conquerors" and its tribute to good wine, certain passages which could have been written only by a connoisseur.

"Ah, I 'm that; yes, I 'm that! Burns would n't appreciate that, but you do." And I spoke of a certain description in the same book, a view from London Bridge, westward, in the late afternoon. And the man chasing his hat in a high wind. I said I had taken an American friend there recently, and he had had to chase his hat, and then, for solace, we had gone to the restaurant in the city, the one described by Meredith, and had had food, and cracked a bottle of the delicate wine which, with tender ritual, had been opened and served to the two men in the story.

"And," said I, "although you disguised the restaurant and the label, I will not disguise from you the fact that my friend is also a connoisseur of the bright and beautiful, the American celebrator of choice things and moments — Thomas Bailey Aldrich — and that he rose at a point in our simple feast and said, with reverence: 'I salute George Meredith.'"

Meredith's eyes twinkled. He rose, lifted his straw hat, bowed, and said: "The Author of 'Marjorie Daw', I am your obliged and humble servant."

And so the honours were even between Aldrich and himself.

Burns put in his word here. "We must go for the five-thirty train. Good-bye, Mr. Meredith, we have had the — "

"No, no, John Burns! It 's not to be heard of! Both of you are to stay for dinner! Mark you that, John Burns. Never, never shall I forgive you two if you leave a poor lone man of ink without dining at his table. The thing is forbidden, forbidden absolutely, John Burns."

Is it strange then that we stayed for dinner, having already taken luncheon, tea, and a stroll with the magician of Box Hill? Not only did we stay, but we stayed till nearly midnight, having just time to catch the last train for London.

And this is a very pleasant part of my recollections of the day:

Our host, when he had shown us to the dining room, excused himself for a moment, lighted a candle, and, opening a door in a corner of the room, descended to the cellar. In two or three minutes he reappeared, his delicate face lighted by the candle which he held in his left hand directly behind a dusty half-bottle of wine, through which the light shone softly in a ruby glow. One saw first the wine, then the light, then the face, as ascending the stairs they entered from below, mounting slowly with

exquisite care lest the wine be shaken. Slowly, and with great care, Meredith wrapped a napkin around the bottle, and drew the cork, placing the bottle at my plate and saying, with the most gracious, old-world courtesy: "For one who knows and appreciates, from one who appreciates and knows."

There was "approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley!"

"John Burns is a teetotaller, they say," added Meredith. "Of such is not the kingdom of my heaven. Burns says you discovered him. What do you think of your discovery? Tell me how it came about."

"Burns does not embody my idea of a modest man," said I. "As for that, there seems to be some doubt, nowadays, whether modest men should be permitted to live. What does Gilbert say:

> "'You must stir it, and stump it
> And blow your own trumpet,
> Or, bless me, you have n't a chance!'

"Well, I came upon Burns first, in '89, when he had London scared (of course London would n't confess that it was scared but it was) and he was 'stumping it' at the dock gates, and from cart-tails on Tower Hill, and was listened to by thousands and tens of thousands of hungry men, and their wives, and youngsters — "

"'Agitating the dregs of London', the newspapers put it," said Meredith.

"All for sixpence an hour," said Burns.

"You have the floor!" said Meredith to me.

"I told you he is not accurately described as a modest man. This is *my* story," I continued, "the story as I see it. London had heard of him — when was it? — in '86, or so, when he led a crowd of East Enders to Trafalgar Square where mass meetings were not permitted, and the crowd got out of hand and smashed plate-glass windows, and Burns got his head broken, or nearly so, and went to gaol."

"'Serve the brute right!' I remember the run of thoughtful British opinion," put in Meredith.

"I was not in England at the time, but I remember the verdict," I said.

"The trouble was," said Burns, "I had n't been introduced to the authorities. There I touched a fundamental British prejudice. The affair secured me the introduction, and opened Trafalgar Square — "

"To the mob," said Meredith.

"To mass meetings," said Burns.

"*I* am playing British chorus," was Meredith's rejoinder.

"Second chapter," said I. "There came the year of the Great Dock Strike. The casual labourer swarmed out of chaos, and struck for a sane, not to say 'civilised' method of hiring, and sixpence an hour."

"And the dock companies, or whatever they were, were not sane, and, also, they had n't a sixpence, they said" — thus Meredith.

"Which was absurd, Mr. Meredith, as you are on the point of adding," I went on. "We don't know how many thousands of men were thrown out

of work. Nobody knows to this day, but here is what I am coming at; there were thousands of them, and there was great suffering in their families. Well, when I first saw Burns he was organising kitchens, and feeding women and children, and making ten speeches every twenty-four hours, and sleeping an hour or two when he could find time and a place to lie down. Some nights he did not sleep at all. The night before I met him he slept four hours in his clothes and boots. In three days he made thirty-six speeches; in three weeks he averaged ten speeches a day, out of doors. He is hoarse still, no wonder.

"I lost sight of him for a bit, and found him again on Tower Hill, speaking to a big crowd. His platform was a dray. When he stopped speaking and jumped down from the dray, I introduced myself to him, said I was mightily interested, and that I wanted to interview him.

"'All right,' said he; 'begin!'

"If he were not modest, I was. 'Not here,' said I, 'let 's go where we can talk in quiet.' So I tucked him into a hansom and, followed by a yelling crowd which we soon left out of sight, we drove to a club of mine in the West End, where we had a long talk. The immediate results were — oh, well, some articles in which I tried to show the world the real John Burns."

"That was the discovery?" asked Meredith.

"Burns calls it so. He was no more modest about being discovered then than he is now. He has a way of telling you straight what he thinks, or what he 's at, or of telling you that he won't tell you."

"I 've noticed that. John Burns, are you under any delusions about popularity? I think you are not."

"I 'm not," said Burns. "When the crowds are cheering their loudest, I am asking myself how soon they will hang my carcass on the outer walls."

"A cheering and useful inquiry," observed Meredith. "My impression is that you have a long course to cover. But leaders of the people are wisest when they remember that there *are* outer walls for the hanging of carcasses."

"The confessions of Radicals strengthen the soul," said I.

"These are not confessions; they are articles of faith," exclaimed Burns.

I intimated that my faith in a political sense was as a grain of mustard seed, human nature being what it was, and political stupidity unconquerable. Gladstone being mentioned by our host, I asked Burns to tell his Gladstone story, that is, what the G. O. M. said to him, and what he said to the G. O. M. at their first meeting.

"It was in the lobby of the House of Commons," Burns explained, "soon after my election. You know I was not what might be called a worshipper of that wonderful man. A bit too independent for his liking, perhaps."

"And the only thing he would dislike, perhaps," said Meredith, smiling.

"Well, you know. I was in the lobby, talking with a front-bench Liberal when the great man passed. The member with whom I was talking

took me up to him and presented me. The G. O. M. bowed, and we shook hands. He said:

"'It gives me pleasure, Mr. Burns, to see you here, to welcome you to the House of Commons.'

"I replied, 'Believe me, sir, my pleasure is equal to your own!' "

"A hit, a palpable hit!" cried Meredith. "I can see Gladstone drawing in his horns."

"He stiffened a bit, and we went our ways. That is all there is of the story," added Burns.

"The one about the docker and the matches is not bad," said I.

"Let me have it," begged Meredith.

"At one of my meetings near the dock gates, a fellow shouted: 'Burn the docks; break in and burn the docks!' He interrupted me two or three times with that cry. The crowd was sullen. It had n't got its sixpence yet. I must stop the roaring fellow, or his mates might get out of control. I borrowed a box of matches from the nearest man. 'Catch!' I cried to the noisy chap. He caught it as I flung it over the heads of the crowd. 'Now, then,' I called to him, 'if you are crazy, if you don't care what happens to all these men and their wives and children, and if you want to ruin this strike, go, fire the docks!' But the man did n't move. I waited, but still he did n't move. Then I said: 'Your hand has n't the courage of your mouth. Take the matches from him, men, hand 'em back to me. Make way for him. He 's shown that he 's a braggin' coward. Out with him!' He skulked away, hooted by the crowd. I suppose that was the

origin of the yarn that I was inciting the mob to burn the docks."

"That 's the way history is written, John Burns. Have you found your dockers suspicious regarding you?" Meredith put the question with a naïve air.

"Of course. Men of their kind are always suspicious, until they know you. Why should n't they be? Whoever went among 'em before those days with any other purpose than to get the best of 'em?"

"They suspected your decent clothes," said I.

Burns laughed. "One morning I appeared in a new suit of blue serge like this, and a new straw hat, like that. 'Where 'd you get 'em, Burns?' one man shouted. 'He 's makin' more 'n sixpence out o' us,' yelled another. Then I had to explain, anyhow, I did explain, that Madame Tussaud's had given me a new suit, so that they could put my old one on a wax figure of me. Tussaud's wanted my old hat, but my wife would n't part with that. She wanted it as a trophy."

We sat at table all the evening talking, George Meredith, John Burns, and I. Of all the men one had ever heard talk, I can't remember one who had a charm of voice and speech excelling Meredith's. I can feel its fascination now across the interval of nearly thirty years. It was, I have said, a musical voice, but it was more than that. It was rich and deep and delicate. The enunciation was perfect with a perfection that was rare and individual; his voice was an instrument with many banks of keys. Charm was its characteristic, charm that no

one could describe, although many have tried to do so. And his eyes, you could say, were bluish-grey, or grey-blue, but you could not say — as they twinkled, or flashed, or seemed at rest like little lakes, pellucid, undisturbed, or lighted instantly as some humorous or sympathetic thought moved behind them — you could not say how, or why they held you, or had the power, a pleasant power, of searching you, looking through you. There was nothing that you could describe in so many words, but there was much that you could feel and like. Even when Meredith spoke of man, or woman, or deed that he did not like, and spoke with dramatic force, his gaze would not blaze or harden. He seemed to be searching serenely beyond the surface for the element of comedy, searching with sympathy and humour for the thing that he could understand, and understand better than any one else in the world. You could always touch him with a sympathetic humour. He did not like wise owls, or rather the owlishness which the run of humans take for wisdom.

His strength, George Meredith's strength, was in his perceptions, his appreciations; physically he was frail, or was frail then! You would n't have supposed him ever to have been a great walker and a man of athletic tendencies. But he had been. Now he walked rather slowly, with a stick, and seemed glad to stop every few minutes. His face made me think of a cameo, by the delicacy of its carving. There was exquisite beauty in it, and the voice enhanced that. But even the most delicate lines

were firmly carved. If you handled him roughly you might bend him, but you could not break his spirit. At the time I speak of, he was beyond his years, far beyond them; physically, but in no other way, he seemed an old and fragile man. And yet neither voice nor eyes suggested anything of the kind. In spirits and outlook he retained the keenness of mighty youth. When he talked with us he was of no age at all, the agelessness of the eternal; it was only when he walked with us about his garden, or over Box Hill, that the flesh betrayed, now and then, its limitations. If you had had his eyes, you might have looked through his body. A strong wind might have carried him away. But he lived sixteen years after that, and, for all his touch of melancholy, they were happy years.

Others could tell other tales of him and have done so; have said, for one thing, that he was quick and tempery. What they meant was that his highly sensitive make-up had n't its times or seasons, but were on and off quite unexpectedly, as is usually the case with highly sensitive folk. Men do not study such sensitive creatures with the object of avoiding trouble; they blunder and thunder on and then are amazed, when they have struck a nerve centre, to find that it has its own method of reacting. And then George Meredith had been more than half his life a reader for publishers. And all his life he was writing poetry and novels! Now if there is any act less likely than another to insure peace of mind, it is the reading of other persons' manuscripts. And to do that regularly, professionally, for several

decades, while you prefer to be a poet and love to be a novelist, is to give oneself to occupations which not only jar upon each other, but upon the nerves of him that undertakes the triple task. Meredith must have had a rare power of concentration to preserve his own authorship from saturation in the flood of manuscripts in which he swam for forty years. His experiences would have paralysed the creative capacity in most men.

I can suppose only that they who found his talk "artificial" must have touched some spring in him that Burns and I did not press. We found him entirely free from artificiality. No pair of strangers could have been more agreeably entertained. And yet we inflicted upon him a long day. They say he was "gey ill to live wi'." Perhaps he was; perhaps he was not. But why should n't he have been? Most writers are. And why should n't they be? They are of a sensitive sort, in greater degree, or less. Their business is mainly to observe, to consider, to speak with ink. These things require concentration of mind. And while the world is running in and out, and kindly intentioned persons are making suggestions which have no relation to the business in hand, or wondering why their wish cannot have precedence, or why their opinion is not the most important thing in the universe, the poet's work, or train of thought, has to get on, or the novelist's, or the reader of manuscripts'. It may be true that no creative gentleman has a right to moods, but at least he has a right to tenses. No such plea is put forth for the rest of mankind.

Probably the fact is that the person criticising considers his own mood the more important of the two. Artistic sensibilities are as difficult for their possessors to endure all the time as they can possibly be for any one else to encounter a part of the time. But who ever thinks of that?

We talked on through the evening, without leaving the dining room. I caught Burns looking apprehensively at the clock. "Yes," said I, "we can catch it if we go at once. It 's the last train." There was a hurried leave-taking, and we were off. We left the kind old gentleman standing in the doorway, holding a lamp which lighted us down the path and shone full upon his face.

"Well?" said Burns, when we were seated in the train.

"A glorious day!" I answered.

"Never a better," said Burns.

Surely we never went through a better day together, and we went through many.

Late one afternoon in 1907, I was crossing the outer lobby of the House of Commons just as John Burns was crossing it in the opposite direction. He saw me first and called out to me.

"Where have you come from now?" he asked, when we had shaken hands. "And how long is it since we met?"

"America this time," said I. "I 've been there four years. But it must be seven years since I 've seen you."

"Gadabout!" said he. "Did you ever have another Meredith day?"

"No," said I, "nor anything like it. Let 's go again."

"Let 's," was his response.

But we did not go again, for, as it turned out, another ten days called me back to America. Burns, of course, was already in the Cabinet, but he wore a blue serge suit, just as of yore.

In 1913 when again I came to England, I did not see him. I had several months in the country but only ten days in town, when I fled with an attentive influenza which Freshwater drove away.

But in 1916, having come the day before from a liner at Liverpool, I was walking in Victoria Street just as Burns turned a corner.

"The oddest thing," said he. "I was just thinking of our day with Meredith. Let 's talk. But don't talk politics. Which way are you going?"

"Any way," I said. And we strolled into the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.

CHAPTER XVI

PARNELL

The man most talked of in '88–'90 was not Mr. Gladstone but Mr. Parnell. The Parnell Commission "had shaken the earth", as an Irish writer said in a moment of unusual restraint. And during its long-drawn life, as during the events which immediately had preceded it, "the uncrowned king of Ireland" was the foremost topic of conversation and of newspaper attention. From the ordeal of the Commission he emerged with triumph, a triumph which in its turn caused some planetary commotion, only to be met with the divorce suit of Captain O'Shea, and the subsequent storms, and snarls, and hopeless desertions of Committee Room Fifteen. Thence to heartbreak and death was but a short and rapid decline.

I knew Parnell but slightly; no one knew him well. Lord Salisbury did not know him at all, had never taken the trouble to cross the lobbies between the Houses of Lords and Commons and look at him or listen to him. "I have never seen him," said Mr. Gladstone's rival. And it was common report that the men who knew Parnell least of all, and least of all about him, were his own

followers. Even that is possible, if it seems unlikely. One of his most conspicuous followers, who wrote conspicuously and talked about him and about Home Rule, I knew very well, and for years I wondered if he really knew as little as he said he did about his chief's ways and work and wisdom. He made a great mystery of them, as many of the Irish members did, or pretended to do. They told you that he kept them at arm's length, scarcely nodded to them, or, if he nodded, did so in a manner that was cold and distant beyond belief. They were the dust beneath his feet. But they told you that they did not resent this treatment; it showed the superiority of the man.

Whether they resented it or not, you may form your own opinion by what they did to him when they got the chance. But before the squalls and gales arose in Committee Room Fifteen, he had held them together; they were a disciplined body. No man before his day had been able to hold them together, to discipline them, to force his will upon them. No other parliamentary leader of the Irish before him produced results. But he produced them. His followers feared him, and they feared him because he was so unlike themselves, so un-Irish. His "mystery" lay in his immense capacity for holding his tongue; in his aloofness; in his concentration. He knew how to get from the rest of the United Kingdom, from the English and Scotch and so on, what he wanted; as a rule, his followers did not. He knew how to play the political game in the British way, with additions of his own; his

followers did not. They had not the patience; they may have had other qualities more captivating than his, but they had not the patience or the art of command.

There was a time when I doubted that he was really so elusive as political persons said. And if he were so, why? It could not be for the mere pleasure of eluding, or deluding people. There would be very little pleasure in that. Well, one day my doubt was dispelled.

Parnell had made an appointment to see me at the House of Commons. It was not for the purposes of a newspaper interview, for he would not have given himself the trouble on that account. It was not for any purpose or interest of my own. I had conveyed to him a proposal from an American editor. It was a proposal which Parnell had not only not declined, but which he was considering with some favour. I was to meet him again and discuss it further. The time and place were of his choosing. I was punctually there, only to be met with the message: "Mr. Parnell is not in the House."

That may have been technically true, as Mrs. A. may be technically "not at home" to Mrs. B. But he was somewhere on the premises, because I saw him enter them. There were good reasons for assuming that the appointment had not slipped his mind, or his memoranda. And so I thought that the person who told me Parnell was not in the House might have invented the reply he gave. He knew of the appointment, and, though he did not know its purpose, knew that Parnell had wished to

see me; why, then, should he give a reply which might put his Chief in the wrong. But then, why had not Parnell sent word or left word, making another appointment? He would scarcely have declined the proposal from America without the courtesy of another meeting. Indeed, he had promised that.

"Very well," I said, "I will wait."

But the agreeable gentleman could not assure me that Mr. Parnell would be at the House that day.

"Has he been here?"

"I believe so."

It was too early to go away. Question time was not over. I decided to wait. Mr. Parnell's representative withdrew. After a while I thought there had been a mistake somewhere. Then I remembered that the emissary "could not assure" me, etc. I thought this odd, in the circumstances, and concluded not to wait any longer. The affair was Parnell's, not mine. But if he had decided to decline the proposal concerning which he had invited me to call upon him, it was not particularly civil of him to take this offhand way of doing so. I left the House and went toward the Westminster Bridge station of the Underground Railway, just opposite the Clock Tower of St. Stephen's. Turning the corner by the gates of Palace Yard, I saw Parnell, ahead of me, cross the street and enter the railway station. He took an eastbound train. I was just in time to catch the same train but not to catch him.

He alighted at the next station, Charing Cross. So did I, intent on overtaking him. But there was

a blocking crowd at the exit stairs where tickets were collected, and he was away first. Up Villiers Street I followed him to the top at the Strand, where he turned into the South Eastern Railway station. This was interesting. Why had n't he, I wondered, taken the outside stairs that led from Villiers Street into the station?

"Possibly he has caught sight of me," I thought. "Is he trying to elude me? Let 's see."

He entered the South Eastern station at the left-hand door. He left it presently by the door on the other side of the cab yard and crossed the Strand to the telegraph office, which at that time was exactly opposite the cab entrance to the railway. I withdrew into the tobacconist's pavilion at the gate and there awaited Parnell's exit from the telegraph office. But he didn't recross the Strand to the station. A hansom was passing the telegraph office door. Parnell ran out, hailed the cab, entered it, and drove eastward along the Strand. I took another cab and kept his in sight. His cab was held up by a block a little to the west of Wellington Street, where a long stream of traffic was crossing to Waterloo Bridge. Parnell left his cab in the crush and disappeared in the pack of humans and vehicles. I left my cab, walked back a short distance along the south side of the Strand, and there turned down by the Savoy Theatre, lingering a little, and then down the steps to the Embankment, keeping inside the gardens. My guess was right. Parnell passed within a few feet of me. He was walking westward. I walked inside the gardens,

he outside and well in advance. He reached the Underground station again, passed through it to Villiers Street, walked up Villiers Street to the wooden stairs of the South Eastern, while I remained at the entrance of the Underground. Then I took a cab to my Club in Piccadilly.

If Parnell thought that he had the best of the chase, that he had given me "the slip", he had another opinion, probably, when, as he was about to enter a suburban train, he was approached by a courteous young man who introduced himself as my assistant and said how fortunate it was meeting like this, because it gave him the opportunity to ask if Mr. Parnell would send me the reply which he had promised for that day, as I wished to cable it to New York.

"Parnell did n't turn a hair," said my assistant, when he reported to me at the Club a few minutes later. "If he were surprised, he did n't show it. But he narrowed his eyes and said, in a frigid way that brought down the temperature of that cold station, 'I will write.' And then the train started."

"And he with it?" I asked.

"No. It left both of us on the platform. I bade him good afternoon and came here. I suppose he took the next train."

I made no comment, but calling for a cable form, wrote on it this message for New York:

"Parnell declines."

"But he has n't declined," my assistant exclaimed.

"No, but he will. You can keep that cable message in your pocket until he does."

The reason I had not followed Parnell into the South Eastern station was that in the train from Westminster to Charing Cross I had told my assistant what to do, and where I thought Parnell was going.

For Parnell's reply I did n't care one way or another. But I thought that I was even with him for his evasion of me at the House, of his treatment of an appointment which he had made, and of a courteous proposal. My method of letting him know, without having said so, that I was not entirely ignorant of his reasons was, in the circumstances, quite legitimate. He could not and did not take open exception to it. And for nearly thirty years I never mentioned it. I do so now simply to illustrate what I mean by his elusiveness. It may interest the few who remember some of his traits. It is quite erroneous to suppose, as many souls not altogether simple seem to do, that a journalist always tells all that he knows.

But I might throw in here this remark: In all that promenade and hide and seek in London streets, nobody seemed to recognise Parnell, nobody turned to look at him. He was merely a passerby like another. Crowds stare, they do not observe. They see only what is pointed out to them, what they expect to see, — and not always that.

Two or three days later, in reply to a telegram of inquiry, Parnell declined the proposal from America. My assistant sent both the inquiry and my cable. Concerning the latter, he asked me:

"What made you certain in advance?"

"A rule known to astute politicians — 2 and 2 make 4. It is not altered by Home Rule, or other matters."

I have often observed, with forty years of opportunity for doing so, that few persons know so little of conditions in Ireland, of Irish conditions in Parliament, of the "Irish movement", whatever that may be at any given time, as the Americans, and particularly the Irish in America. I have had my share of rebuke for mentioning this. An illustration will serve.

During the summer of 1890 I had a few weeks in the United States. One evening in Boston I happened to meet, as I was passing his office, a man whom I knew well, Jeffrey Roche, Editor of *The Pilot*, an Irish paper and the principal organ of Roman Catholicism in New England. Roche had been the assistant, and later became the successor, to the late John Boyle O'Reilly, and like him was a delightful and lovable fellow and the writer of charming verse. He hated England, of course, and as I did not, we had many tilts, in print and out of it, but we were always good friends.

"Hullo, Jeffrey," said I.

"Hullo, my enemy," said he, laughing as we shook hands.

"Why 'enemy'?" I asked. "Has poor old Ireland another grievance?"

"You wronged Parnell!"

"Sit down and tell me about it," said I.

And we went to dine at the nearest restaurant where the dear fellow explained that an article of

mine, sent from London and published in the *Boston Herald* during the previous February, had "scandalised all Irishmen" and "imperilled the chances of Home Rule."

"Dear, dear," said I, "that 's a lot for one man to do! How did it happen?"

"Your article said that an action for divorce had been entered by a Captain O'Shea who named Parnell as corespondent."

"Well, what of it? Everybody knows it."

"I don't know it. We don't know it here. Nobody knows it."

"And you 're an editor, Jeffrey! Is that the way you keep the run of the news?"

"Such a case has never been tried."

"It has not *yet* been tried, you mean. Of course not; it has to take its turn. It will come on in the autumn."

"Who is O'Shea?"

I stared at Roche in amazement. And then I laughed.

"Jeffrey," said I, "you do it very well."

"Do what? No," said he, "it is n't acting. Who is he?"

I told him, and added that the question had been put differently by the Irish members of Parliament a long time ago. They asked at one time — "Why is he?" After a while they asked nothing.

"And your article said that the Irish party would turn against Parnell if the case were tried, and that the English Liberals would throw him over, and the Home Rule cause would go to pieces."

"Pardon me, Jeffrey, my article said that those would be some of the results if O'Shea *won* his case, not if the case were tried."

"Gladstone would n't turn against Parnell!"

"Jeffrey, if that 's all you know about the Irish Question, take my advice and return to Ireland by the next ship and study it on the spot. Then go to Westminster and study it there. Learn what the Unionists think, what Liberals think, and what Mr. Gladstone, as leader of the Liberal Party, has to think, and —"

"It 's another Piggott trick! Parnell's defence will show it all up."

"Suppose he should n't defend himself?"

"That 's unfair!"

"Let me tell you a thing or two. Make a note of 'em, and see what happens within a year!"

In the course of the next two hours Roche heard more of the inside of Irish and English politics than I would have supposed could previously have escaped an editor's mind. It was clear that the comings and goings of Irish parliamentarians bent on propaganda and money-raising had not left behind much information that could guide a distant editor over a course abounding with obstacles. My experience with Roche that evening resembled all the experiences I have ever had in the United States when talking on the Irish question with persons who seemed really anxious for information. And the situation is much the same at this hour, differing only in kind, not in degree.

The events of November and December, 1890,

proved to my doubting friend the truth of all I had told in print or out of it during the preceding months. But he was as much surprised at the end of the year as he had been when I talked with him in May. Roche died years ago; perhaps he knew by that time how matters stood. At all events, perhaps he knows now. The Irish in America were not in those days, and have not been since then much or far behind the scenes of a certain political stage. They have paid their money, and, like other audiences, have remained in front to watch, to listen, to applaud, or to hiss. If they have frequently applauded or derided in the wrong places, other audiences beholding other dramas have done no less.

The conditions in Ireland, and concerning Ireland, are not new to me. I have known them pretty well for forty years. If I were an Irishman I would think, no doubt, on most points political, with other fellow countrymen of my party. But what party would that be? I might answer, if you could tell me where I would have been born and of what religious faith. My sympathy with Ireland is deep; it would be so, if only for the matchless, the invincible stupidity with which she has been and is still governed. But her "injustices" and "woes" have long since been wiped out. That is one thing they do not know in America. But it is unnecessary to go beyond certain Nationalist speeches in the House of Commons to learn as much. John Redmond said a good deal on that point. But now there are no Nationalist speeches, no Nationalist members to speak of. The Nationalist Party is dead. The

Irish seats in the House of Commons are empty, voluntarily empty. Had Ireland done her share in the War, she would have had Home Rule before the Armistice. But she would not do her share, and she does not appear to desire Home Rule, and Great Britain did not try to force her. In America the meaning of this is not quite understood. While Great Britain was sending millions of men to the front, while her manhood was everywhere conscripted, while her fathers and sons were fighting the malignant German, while she was depriving herself of money, food, clothing, economising in the very necessaries of life, not merely in order to provide for her armies, but to aid her allies, Ireland did nothing. Ireland's food was not rationed; she had plenty and to spare; plenty to eat, plenty to drink, plenty to wear; petrol and motor cars were not forbidden her, they were forbidden to Britain; the luxuries which Britain denied herself were abundant in Ireland; she was, in fact, the most favoured country in Europe. She was never so prosperous as throughout the war.

But not a hand would she lift to defend her soil against the Germans. Thousands of Irishmen were at the front; they fought splendidly, but it was not in accordance with the will of Ireland that they fought. It was because they willed it themselves. Ireland was exempted from conscription. Englishmen and Scotsmen, Welshmen and Cornishmen, all the men and all the women from Land's End to John O'Groat's have long memories for things like that. And so have many Americans.

It is useless, I suppose, to say that Parnell's course had he lived to and through the war time, still leading Irish politics, would have been this, or would have been that. He did not have to face such conditions; they were not forward in his time, but they were always at the back of the minds of some British statesmen, and he knew it. He knew that the dominant reason which stood between Ireland and Independence was the need of Great Britain to guard herself against attacks and invasions from the Continent. France was thought to be the potential enemy then, as she had been supposedly since the days of Napoleon I. Well, we know what Germany did. England could no more allow the island on her western flank to become an independent power than the United States could permit any of her forty-eight States to break away from the family roof. Are arguments for separation based on racial and religious differences more valid in the case of Ireland than they are in the case of the United States? What are the racial differences between Ireland and Great Britain compared with the racial differences in the United States, differences which arose through conquest and purchase, not alone through immigration? The Indians, the Mexicans, the Spaniards, the French, the Negroes? And then the welter of immigrations on top of these? And is the argument for majority rule, based, as it is usually, upon the majority in Ireland, more valid? Ireland is, and has been for centuries, an integral part, a vital part of the political organism known since 1801 as "the United Kingdom", and

of that organism the Irish population, in Ireland, is but a small minority of the whole! In an age of democracy shall a minority rule? In the United States we know something about secession; we have clear and firm opinions on it now. Why should we expect Britain to permit the secession of Ireland? And if the Ulster problem presents such "vast difficulties", what becomes of the famous panacea — Self-Determination? Won't the panacea work in Ulster's case?

These points were just as clear in Parnell's day as they are this morning. The Home Rule cause was one thing; the Separatist, Independence case was quite distinctly another thing. Parnell knew that he could never satisfy Ireland if Independence were what she wanted. The hot-heads in her politics were seeking that and not Home Rule. Home Rule was almost won by Parnell; after him it was thrown away by bitter dissensions within his party. Thirty years more were required to bring the factions to a point where they could pull together. Then the inevitable dissensions broke out anew. The power that had been John Redmond's slipped away, and Redmond's party went to pieces as Parnell's had done. It is folly to put the blame on the Nationalists alone, or on the Ulstermen alone. The conditions do not mix. They are antagonistic.

And, though the ideals of Ulster are not the ideals of the rest of Ireland, must Ulster be punished for her ideals? Ulster asks the privilege of being loyal to Britain. Must she then be punished for her

loyalty and punished by Britain? That is a question which Americans who are so frequently called upon to interfere in the Irish question never ask themselves, because it is never presented to them. But if they were to ask it concerning any State in the American Union in its relation to the Government at Washington, there is no doubt what their answer would be.

What of the rest of Ireland? At present the Sinn Feiners have the floor. They proclaim openly what the Nationalists, or most of them, are said to have concealed; their object, — Independence. But they know that if Ireland should become an Independent Power, she must meet her obligations of financial maintenance. She could not meet them without drawing upon, or absorbing the revenues of Ulster. And she might not be able to meet them then. Are these matters, and matters such as these, to be settled, or even helped by pious resolutions passed in Madison Square Garden, or Faneuil Hall, or the Congress at Washington?

It might be thought that the ingenuity of man, to say nothing of his justice, could find a way out of this age-long dilemma. It can be seen that the dilemma is not quite so simple as at a distance it has been commonly supposed. And it can be said that difficult as the problem is, it has become none the less difficult through the conflict of views and policies of Sinn Feiners, clericals, Home Rulers, Ulstermen, the Asquith government, or the Lloyd-George government, politicians in America, or rhetoricians anywhere.

I find that thirty years ago I wrote in an American newspaper: "Parnell puzzles the British mind, because measures proposed in behalf of Ireland are rejected whether they come from Mr. Gladstone or from Mr. Balfour. It has not yet dawned upon the British mind that Parnell means that Parliament wastes its time over land bills and other remedial legislation; that the Irish mean to settle the land question, and all other Irish questions, without English assistance. What he wants is Home Rule and not land acts. What he wants *beyond* Home Rule he does not say, and no one is in his confidence."

It was all very well, but he could not prevent the Briton from bringing gifts, nor could he avoid him. The world has moved a long way since Parnell died and has brought changes of which he did not dream. But there, stripped of detail, was his object. If the ultimate object were not set forth, it was because he wanted Ireland to get Home Rule first. The difficulties of the step beyond that he knew well and appreciated thoroughly. Perhaps it was because he knew the British view so well, and could understand it so well because he was half-English and half-American, that his point of view was not limited by Irish experiences and aspirations. It may be that he did not expect Independence in his time, perhaps not really at any time. But whether he did or not, he said in the House of Commons, in April, 1890, "We have not based our claims to nationhood on the sufferings of our country." Well, if they were based on other

grounds, it is likely that he saw insurmountable obstacles in their way.

I am far from agreeing with the conventional assertion that Parnell wrecked his party and postponed Home Rule by a generation. Such assertions are made easily, and they are easily accepted by the crowd. They ignore many other factors, even factors that I have suggested here. And they ignore the necessity which all politicians were under, or supposed themselves to be under, of claiming a virtue, though some had it not. I think of some politicians who were professionally horrified over the O'Shea case, although their own lives would not have borne the examination of a divorce court, and who had not in their lives the mitigating circumstance that Parnell had, — an absorbing love. And I think of the politicians who were professionally "surprised" but who had had a long preparation for what was coming. All the forces of hypocrisy and cant were let loose at that time, all the forces of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness; and they did not rest until Parnell was crushed and dead. The spectacle was enough to make one nauseated forever with politics — and some other things.

Mrs. Parnell's book on her husband, published in 1916, throws a clear light upon that chapter in Parnell's life. I see no reason to doubt its statements and conclusions; I see many reasons for accepting them. They confirm the impressions that many of us had thirty years ago, and relate facts that some of us more than surmised at that

time, and before it. It is scarcely possible for them to deal with the hypocrisy and jealousy, revengefulness and cant that broke a man's life and a nation's cause. These were not in Ireland alone. Britain and America had their share.

Was Parnell a great man? I am inclined to think that he just missed greatness. If he had won, there would be no doubt, I suppose. That he was the man for his time there can be no denying. It is idle, I suppose, to speculate whether he would have been the man for the time after Home Rule had been gained, for then the duties would have been vastly different. And yet they would have called for qualities not common among Irishmen, among political Irishmen in Ireland, I mean, — the qualities that made him eminent and successful as a leader. He was not eloquent, but eloquence is not essential to greatness. He did not inspire affection, devotion. To this it may be answered that the people of his country loved him. So they did. But a great many politicians who were his followers did not. Some of them entertained for him emotions quite opposite to love. Of course he inspired respect; more than that, he instilled fear into the hearts of his parliamentary army. They feared him then. But if his aloofness, his detachment from the usual, even the unusual, affairs of society and human interest, was one of his most remarkable characteristics, it was in his favour rather than against him, it contributed to "the mystery" in which his personality was shrouded, a mystery cultivated less by himself than by legend.

An eminent politician whose life is isolated must be "mysterious" to the crowd.

He did not care for the play, for music, for pictures, or for literature, excepting when literature bore upon the work in hand. He did not care for society, for sport, for games of any kind. And so he was a mystery to more countries than one. He was easily bored; the ordinary life of politics bored him, his followers bored him; it often bored him to make a speech. His power was in his set purpose, his concentration upon it, his absolute disinterestedness. Save in one instance, he ground no axe and was not the cause of axe-grinding by others.

Although he was not an orator, he could and did put a case plainly, strongly, indeed with very great strength. He was cool when it paid to be cool, vigorous when vigour was required; he was seldom impassioned. When he was angriest he was least stirred. Internally he might rage, as when under general attack, when the assailants were, in a double sense, offensive, but outwardly he would be calm and pale. You would know when he felt the fiercest stress, not by his voice nor by his actions, but by his pallor. It was only in the last months of his life that he gave his temper free rein, let himself go, fiercely lashed his opponents, hitherto his partisans. There was something of revenge in this, of resentful wrath long pent up. Who shall say it was not justified, or that it was unnatural?

What he would have been as an administrator we have no means of knowing. What he would

have been as the leader of an Irish parliament we may at least imagine. He had always been in Opposition. What he would have been in power we may guess but never know. But his lot would not have been enviable. It was never enviable. His death, in 1891, was a happy release.

CHAPTER XVII

"LE BRAV' GÉNÉRAL"

WHO *was* Boulanger?

At the Cheshire Cheese, a year before the war, a young Fleet Streeter asked the question. He had heard some of us spinning yarns. But the name of Boulanger meant nothing to him. The world was created in the year he came to Fleet Street, say in 1908.

There are times when I feel it necessary to apologise for writing of the days of antiquity. There will certainly be some one to exclaim, when he sees the heading of this chapter, "Why drag Boulanger into *London Days?*"

One answer would be: Because I knew Boulanger in London.

"Was he ever here? How strange we should have forgotten it!"

Not in the least strange. Boulanger was forgotten soon after he arrived. He arrived at the Hotel Bristol, behind Burlington House, and was cheered by a few waiters and chambermaids. It was a murky afternoon in the summer of '89, — dark, damp, and dreary. I saw him alight from his carriage. Some of the papers next day told of "the enthusiastic

greeting" he had received. Thus history is made. A few waiters, a porter or two, half a dozen chambermaids, and, of course, a manager. These were the enthusiasts.

It was a little disappointing to those who love "scenes", or have to describe them. Nothing happened. Of course, it was not disappointing to realise that one was a prophet. I had prophesied a scene like this, months before, when quite another kind of scene was being played in Paris, when Boulanger had the ball at his feet, or the game in his hands, if you prefer a choice of metaphors. He did n't play. There was merely an escape of gas from the balloon. The gas was not inflammable.

"Le brav' Général" they called him. Up to the twenty-eighth of January, 1889, he was the hope of France. He was to be Head of the Army, Prime Minister, or President, or King, or Emperor, or Dictator, whatever he chose. He was to save France. She needed saving. Politically, she was in the dismallest bog. She needed a MAN, thought she had found him in Boulanger, and on the twenty-seventh of January, Paris was to elect him to Parliament. Paris would give him a backing so enormous that he would "seize the reins of power." There would be a *coup d'état.* That was what the papers said. There was quite a commotion, naturally.

Obviously I must go to Paris before the twenty-seventh; I must see the *coup d'état* whose approach was thundering from all the presses of Europe. There would be articles by the yard. In those

times, newspaper reproductions of photographs were even less satisfactory than they are now. I looked about for an artist who could go with me and illustrate my articles. He must know something about the trick of drawing for newspaper reproduction, he must be a quick worker, for there was no time to be lost, and he must not be too well known because the chances were that a well-known artist would n't be able to cast his work aside at a day's notice, and bolt with me for Paris. I sent my assistant to find the right man.

He returned to me with a dejected look. "I 've found only one man who can go," said he.

"One is enough," said I.

"Yes, but — will he do? I 've only these two specimens of his work to show you." And he laid two small drawings before me.

"Capital!" said I.

"He has been in Paris, studied art there. And he lives in Chelsea."

"Terms all right?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Then I 'll see him to-morrow. By the way, what is his name?

"L. Raven-Hill."

And so it came about that the young man — he was a very young man then, under twenty-two — who was to win fame as one of the principal cartoonists for *Punch*, went to Paris with me and illustrated the Boulanger election. He illustrated for me other subjects in and about Paris. And when I went to Ireland, to do a series of articles a little

later, he was the illustrator. And he drew London subjects for me. In fact, he was for about six months my chosen illustrator. Then somebody in authority on the other side of the Atlantic wanted the preference given to certain other artists. Authority, of course, had to be obeyed, since it was paymaster. And in this case it had in its eye one or two young men who had come abroad, and who had influence enough to pull strings at headquarters. They were cousins to the owner's aunts, or something like that. Their work was too careless, grotesque, and altogether weak. After allowing them sufficient opportunity to demonstrate this, even to the satisfaction of their proprietary relatives, they were released from service. And ever afterwards I insisted upon choosing my own illustrators. But meantime I had lost Raven-Hill, and some foreign mission calling me afield, there was no opportunity for renewing the connection. When I returned to London, Raven-Hill had found his feet, as I knew he would. The other day we compared our recollections of that time. They did not differ.

His work was admirable, even in those early days. It lent distinction to the text. I daresay that may have been the only distinction the text had. Raven-Hill entered into the spirit of the thing, and would go to any inconvenience to get what I wanted. And in the Boulanger campaign, that meant a good deal of inconvenience. We travelled by night trains because they were cheapest. If they were cheapest, they were also slowest. But all was grist that came to our mill.

Paris we reached two days before the election. We looked for excitement but found none. It is not every day that Paris elects a "Saviour of France." It was preparing to elect one, and it was certain that he was to save France. There was a frenzy of bill-posting, but that was all. All the electioneering was done by post and posters. Not a speech was made. Posters covered everything, inches deep. Paris was smothered by them. Boulanger posters were covered with Jacques posters. Jacques was the candidate opposing "Le brav' Général." Jacques was a nobody with money. Only a nobody with money could have afforded to stand against "Le brav' Général." Before he offered himself for the sacrifice, nobody had ever heard of Jacques. After election day nobody heard of him again. He had his little explosion of glory, and then happy obscurity. But his account for bill-posting and printing must have been heavy. So must have been Boulanger's.

Statuary was [illegible] with bills, and so were cabs. A Boulangist w[illegible] a bill over the nose of a bronze lion. [illegible]ist would follow and cover the Boulang[illegible]he lion in the Place de la République [illegible]us with bills from his snout to the tip of [illegible] great-coat of paper. Above the lion a sto[illegible]ft was inscribed:

A
LA GLOIRE
DE LA
RÉPUBLIQUE
FRANÇAISE

The Glory of the French Republic seemed great enough to bear with equanimity the burden of Boulangist printing. The men who were posting Boulangist bills carried ladders. The Jacques men had no ladders. And so the Boulangists had the best of it. Wherever there was a smooth surface, and in numerous places where there was not, bills went up. They were manifestoes, proclamations, election cries. Nobody made a speech. The printer did all. Arches, façades, trees, cabs, even the Opera House itself, theatres, shops, were splashed with coloured bills, Boulanger over Jacques and Jacques over Boulanger. And only small boys took notice.

The papers said that large reserves of police were held in readiness; they said the military had been strengthened. One of them said that detachments of cavalry had been shod with rubber so they might come noiselessly upon riote[illegible]nd smite them unawares. An editor applaude[illegible] ingenious device. He forgot that King Lear[illegible]ore, had thought it

> ". . . a delicate s[illegible]
> To shoe a troop of [illegible] felt."

The London papers were eve[illegible]ited than the French. In fact, it had bee[illegible]rmist reports of Paris correspondents and new[illegible]aux that had incited me to the journey. I loc[illegible]r the exciting scenes these gentlemen had wit[illegible] and foretold. There was nothing visible to [illegible]y their fears. Where were the marching crowds [illegible]at were singing "The Marseillaise"? They had not marched, they

had not assembled, they had not sung a note. It is not easy to describe an invisible demonstration.

We went wherever a demonstration was possible or probable; we covered Paris by cab, by bus, on foot. Excepting for the posters, Paris carried itself as usual.

"Go to the Fourth Arrondissement if you would see the fun," said a friendly councillor who knew the ropes. We went, but "the fun" did not come. We found three hundred persons at the *mairie*, half of them registering, and the other half looking on. They were as solemn as if they had been paying taxes. The next day, Sunday, the voting took place. There were 568,697 voters on the registries of Paris. Of these 32,837 did not vote at all, and 27,118 voted neither for Boulanger nor for Jacques. Boulanger won, hands down.

At eleven o'clock on the Sunday morning we were at Boulanger's house, expecting that the world would be there. The world was not there, nor was anybody but ourselves. The Rue Dumont d'Urville (Boulanger lived at Number 11) looked deserted. It was off the *Champs Élysées*, near the *Arc de Triomphe*. A thousand persons a day had, for weeks, been calling on "Le brav' Général." In the preceding fortnight the number had doubled. "To-day the General receives no one," said the boy in buttons who was sweeping out the hall. So much the better; if he receives no one to-day, the more chance of seeing him. Besides, Raven-Hill wanted to draw Boulanger from the life. It would be a fine thing to have drawn the "Saviour of France" on the

day when he saved France; perhaps while he was in the very act of saving her.

"It is impossible," repeated the boy in buttons, "the General does not receive to-day."

But the General was a political candidate, and the boy in buttons was a Jew. Palm oil passed from one of us to the buttoned youth. Raven-Hill sketched him. Jointly we begged for his autograph. He wrote it underneath his portrait — "Joseph."

"Joseph," said I, "you are famous from this hour. Your portrait will appear in an American newspaper." Joseph grinned. He yielded. He disappeared with our cards. Returning presently, he said that the General would receive us, and he directed us up the stairs. On a landing above stood "Le brav' Général." He bowed, he shook hands in the English fashion, he did not embrace us in the French; he smiled, he bade us enter his study. Monsieur l'artiste might sketch where he liked. And R-H. sat in a corner, which commanded the large room, and began to draw without losing a minute.

Would M. le Général talk with me a little while the artist drew?

M. le Général begged a thousand pardons, but he was too much occupied; moreover he was never interviewed. Would we smoke? We would. He passed cigarettes.

"But, M. le Général, the election?"

"*C'est une chose faite!*"

That was all he would say. And then it was only eleven in the morning. But he declared that the

thing was done. And this with a calmly complacent air. I admired his "nerve", as we would say in America. But that was all he would say:

"*C'est une chose faite!*"

He repeated it. And I took it that France was saved. And so she was, but not in the way he had expected; and not by him.

Raven-Hill, whose French was at any rate in better working order than mine, tried questioning, but "Le brav' Général," with great courtesy, begged a thousand pardons and deprecated "interviewing."

I begged ten thousand pardons, and R-H. resumed his sketching. "Le brav' Général" handed me a small bundle of printed matter, — pamphlets, proclamations, manifestoes, announcements. I would find it all there, he said. I looked them over, thanking him, and saying that I had previously read them, which was the case.

"Ah," said he, "*c'est une chose faite.*"

As a matter of fact, I was quite content. I was getting what I wanted, the drawings. I did not want political platitudes, and before election day I had formed the opinion that political platitudes were the General's stock-in-trade. He had not a single political idea. What he always said was what his backers wanted him to say.

He was "the man-on-horseback", and that was enough. France had been looking a long time for the man-on-horseback. He would ride in and conquer the internal foes of France; they were numerous enough and to spare. He would unite the country, bring it stability, cleanse the Augean

stables, win back Alsace-Lorraine, humble the Germans who had humiliated them, who had menaced them ever since 1870–1871. He would be a MAN, this man-on-horseback. And Boulanger had been riding a white horse these three years. Sometimes he rode a black horse.

At one end of the room, behind the chair where he sat at his writing table, was a large painting, a very large one, of General Boulanger on his horse.

The room in which we sat was large, too. It had been a studio and was now a study. A great fireplace occupied one end of it, and the General on horseback occupied the other end. The general himself sat below the portrait, at his writing table, while Raven-Hill drew and I smoked. He could not have better suited the artist's purpose. He was not quite like the photographs, engravings, paintings, "reproductions" of him that one had seen, and that filled France. His hair was not clear black, and brushed nattily; it was streaked with grey, and worn shoe-brush fashion. His beard was tawny, touched with grey. His face was a stronger one, his head a better one, than the conventional portraits prepared you for. He was between fifty-one and fifty-two at that time. A handsome man, but disappointing. He did n't impress one as being a man of authority, of decisions. What his mouth was like, and what his chin, I do not know. His beard concealed them. But I did not get from him the impression of strength. And yet he was the most popular man in France. And that day the eyes not only of France, but of Europe, were watching him.

His face was deeply lined; his eyes were grey; he was in fatigue dress. May I whisper in your ear? I do not believe that he was pressed with work; I believe that he was posing for us.

He was a vain creature. His vanity had been much indulged during the three years or more preceding. He was an ordinary man of showy gifts, an efficient general in a small way. He had been a favourite of fortune, and usually in trouble with his superior officers. He always came out of the trouble "at the top of the heap", as they say. Freycinet made him Minister of War in '86. The Ministry of War advertised him up and down the land. It may be said to have begun his popularity. He looked well after the lot of the private soldier. As the private soldier came from every home in France, Boulanger had advocates who carried his name and praises to every fireside. He understood that sort of thing. His star was rising fast. He glittered before the eyes of all men. He was an heroic figure at reviews, a much sought figure in drawing-rooms; the clericals were zealous in his favour, purses were at his disposal. He was the popular hero, without having done anything heroic. Powerful partisans played, even paid for his favour. His principal backer was the Duchesse D'Uzes. There was an abundance of money.

Well, when the artist had got what he wanted, had drawn the room and Boulanger, we took our leave and went forth for the melancholy Jacques and election scenes, saying *au revoir* to Joseph at the door. Joseph said — I think he had been in-

structed to say it — and he said it with an air of one who whispered confidences:

"The General will dine this evening at the Café Durand."

The Café Durand, of course, was opposite the Madeleine. We stopped there on our way about town. We lunched there, and made friends with the head waiter, Edmond, a portly personage of manner and renown. Edmond was enlisted, as Joseph had been. And he signed his portrait with a flourish quite royal — Edmond Ulray.

Could R-H. see the private room in which General Boulanger and his friends would dine that evening?

But certainly. And Monsieur could draw it if he chose.

Of course, that was what he chose to do. And when the evening came, it was quite a simple matter for Edmond to arrange that R-H., without being seen, should draw "Le brav' Général", and Comte Dillon, and Paul de Cassagnac, Henri Rochefort, and Paul Deroulade, at the table, in the front room, up one flight, on the corner overlooking the Madeleine.

Here was the centre of interest that night, — that room in the Café Durand. Would "Le brav' Général" press the button there, spring his *coup d'état*, show himself to the crowd, and proceed triumphantly from there to the Élysées? That was what the crowd expected. That was what it wanted. I was outside with the crowd. R-H. was inside, sketching. It was marvellous how quickly he worked.

The crowd knew that Boulanger was in the Café

Durand; they knew that Jacques was in a café on the opposite side of the way; they knew which was the winner. And the thoroughfares were packed with people. They wanted to march, they wanted to sing, they wanted to cheer. But nobody started them. There was no demonstration. Neither side wished a demonstration to go the wrong way. Both sides knew that the government had determined to put down riots, revolutions, and disorders. But why did n't somebody *start something?* Jacques, being defeated, did not show himself. Boulanger was victorious, but he did not show himself. The crowd moved back and forth, packed within the boulevards. But nothing happened. No hero appeared at a window; nobody made a speech; not a curtain was drawn aside; not a flag fluttered. By midnight the crowd had gone home to bed.

And that is why I prophesied that night Boulanger's utter collapse and his probable flight for safety. Little wisdom was required to make the prophecy. A man who has the ball at his foot and does n't kick it is not the "saviour" of a nation. Boulanger had lost his chance. The next day he was no longer the most popular of Frenchmen.

He "saved France" by his failure.

A little later he fled to Belgium. A little later still he turned up in London, as I have said. But he did not stay long at the Hotel Bristol. He took a furnished house, Number 51 Portland Place, brought his horses from Paris, and gave out that he would ride in the Park at the fashionable hour. But he did not ride. And as he did not keep his word

in so small a matter, London lost what small interest it had in him when he did ride, or when he received. One day "a grand Boulangist demonstration" was announced to take place at the Alexandra Palace. Proceedings, more or less elaborate, were advertised, and they were to end with a "banquet" at five shillings a head. Covers were to be laid for twenty-six hundred persons. Only six hundred persons appeared. Boulanger was to be "the lion of the season." I don't know who thought so besides himself. He issued an address "To the People; My Sole Judge", meaning the people of Paris. The address was nine columns long!

It fell to my lot to interview him on two or three occasions. I did not wish to do so, but there were requests from headquarters. Each time he sang the old songs. The interview that you had with him one week would do for another, with the change of a few words. He really liked to talk. He pretended that he disliked being interviewed on political subjects, but that was mere mock-modesty. He spoke English well enough. In fact, he had been a schoolboy at Brighton, and he had represented France at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. He was merely "layin' low" that day in Paris, like Brer Fox, only he was not Brer Fox, his one desire being not to have anything said or done on the twenty-seventh of January that would give the Government an excuse for a raid on his designs. I think he was rather a pitiable object. Few others thought so before the twenty-eighth of January, 1889. He was merely a mechanism for the issue of

promissory notes. It was about two years after his arrival in London that he committed suicide on the continent.

How well he illustrated Lincoln's saying about "fooling the people"! But he did not fool himself. He was the tool of more designing persons.

"C'est une chose faite."

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